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THE Fourth Volume of this COLLECTION of FARCES makes its appearance about the time promiſed; and, as was formerly announced, will terminate the publication for the preſent.

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The uncommon ſucceſs this undertaking has met with from the Public, demands the Publiſher's warmeſt acknowledgments: and he flatters himſelf that the contents of the preſent volume will be found of equal, if not ſuperior merit to any of the former; while the improvement of marking with inverted commas thoſe parts uſually omitted in the repreſentation, will, it is preſumed, ſerve to ſtamp an additional value on the Collection.

EDINBURGH, *June* 1783.

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THE

THE

TWINS;

OR,

WHICH IS WHICH?

IN THREE ACTS.

Altered from SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY OF ERRORS.

By MR WOODS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

SHAKESPEARE'S *Comedy of Errors* has never obtained a rank on the ſtage equal with the other comedies of that excellent author. Without enumerating the various cauſes that might be aſſigned of its indifferent reception, the editor contents himſelf with mentioning only *one*, as it explains the motive from which he undertook both the former and the preſent alteration:—The frequent repetition of ſimilar blunders, which are occaſioned by the likeneſs between the *Antipholiſes* and *Dromios*, and are continued through five long acts, produces an intricacy that perplexes, and a ſameneſs that tires, an audience. With a view to remedy theſe defects, the editor, a few years ago, reduced the comedy to three acts, and it was performed, as an after-piece, with much approbation; but as his veneration for the author made him retain too many of the ſcenes, there ſtill exiſted in the comedy, when altered, too much of the confuſion and uniformity of the original.—He has therefore ventured to make further alterations; and flatters himſelf the piece, as it now ſtands, will be conſidered not an unacceptable addition to the liſt of Theatrical Entertainments.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ. *Edin.* 1780.

Duke of Ephesus,	Mr Hallion.
Ægeon,	Mr Smith.
Antipholis of Ephesus,	Mr Woods.
Antipholis of Syracuse,	Mr Cautherley,
Dromio of Ephesus,	Mr Bailey.
Dromio of Syracuse,	Mr Chalmers.
Angelo,	Mr Lane.
Balthazar,	Mr Taylor.
First Merchant,	Mr Lyon.
Second Merchant,	Mr Wood.
Doctor Pinch,	Mr Charteris,
Officer,	Mr Colby.
Æmilia,	Mrs Montague.
Adriana,	Mrs Smith.
Luciana,	Miss Mills.
Hostess,	Mrs Bailey.

SCENE, *Ephesus.*

ACT I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter ANTIPHOLIS *of* SYRACUSE, *First* MERCHANT *and* DROMIO.

First MERCHANT.

THEREFORE give out you are of Epidamnum—
For by a law in force it is enacted,
If any stranger, born in Syracusa,
Come to our port of Ephesus, he dies;
Unless, indeed, he be possess'd of wealth
Sufficient to discharge a heavy forfeiture.
There is your money that I had to keep.

Ant. of Syr. Go, bear it to the Centaur where we host,
And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee:
Get thee away.

Dro. of Syr. Many a man would take you at your word,
And go indeed, having so good a means.—[*Exit Dromio.*

Ant. of Syr. A trusty villain, Sir, that very oft
Lightens my humour with his merry jests.

1 *Mer.* If't please you, Sir, I now will claim your promise,
To trust me with that part of your adventures
Which yet I have not heard.

Ant. of Syr. —— In Syracusa,
As I have told you, was my father born;

And

And, by the proſp'rous voyages he made
To Epidamnum, grew a wealthy merchant.
To ſhare his happineſs, he took a wife—
Who on a viſit to my father's friends
In Epidamnum, with him croſs'd the ſea;
And there ſoon gave him, at a ſingle birth,
Two ſons—that ſo reſembled each the other,
They could not be diſtinguiſh'd.—Stranger ſtill,
In the ſame houſe, and at the ſelf-ſame hour,
A poor mean woman was delivered
Of ſuch another burden—two male twins,
That, like my father's boys, (myſelf and brother)
Puzzled their parents to tell which was which.

1. *Mer.* 'Twas ſtrange, indeed!

Ant. of Syr. Theſe did my father purchaſe of the woman,
Deſigning them attendants on his ſons;
But ſoon returning home to Syracuſa,
A tempeſt roſe, that daſh'd our bark in pieces.
My mother, brother, and his little ſlave,
On a ſmall raft the ſailors had prepar'd,
Were driven by the waves.
Upon another plank, my hapleſs father,
Myſelf, and th' other infant-twin were bound;
And being next day ſeen by friendly voyagers,
They ſav'd, and brought us into Syracuſa.—
At eighteen years I undertook to ſearch
After my mother's and my brother's fate.
Five ſummers have I rang'd in diſtant climes,
And, coaſting homeward, came to Epheſus,
In hopes to find them—But in vain I ſeek,
And ſeeking them, unhappy loſe myſelf.——

1 *Mer.* I take an intereſt, Sir, in your misfortunes:
I am *now* engag'd to certain friends on buſineſs;
But ſoon again, at five o'clock, ſo pleaſe you,
I'll meet with you upon the mart.——

Ant. of Syr. 'Till then, farewell.———[1 *Mer. exit.*

Enter Dromio of Epheſus.

What now—how chance thou art return'd ſo ſoon?

Dro. of E. Return'd ſo ſoon! rather approach'd too late.
The capon burns, the pig falls from the ſpit,
The clock has ſtrucken one by the town-clock—
My miſtreſs made it two upon my cheek.

Ant. of S. Stop in your wind, Sir; tell me this, I pray,
Where have you left the money that I gave you?

Dro. of E. Oh,—six-pence, that I had o' Wednesday last,
To pay the sadler for my mistress' crupper—
The sadler had it, Sir; I kept it not.

Ant. of S. I am not in a sportive humour now:
Tell me, and dally not, where is the money?

Dro. of E. I pray you, jest, Sir, as you sit at dinner:
I from my mistress come to you in post;
Methinks, your maw, like mine, should be your clock,
And strike you home without a messenger.

Ant. of S. Come, Dromio, come, these jests are out of season;
Reserve them till a merrier hour than this,
And tell me, how thou hast dispos'd thy charge.

Dro. of E. My charge was but to fetch you from the mart
Home to your house, the Phœnix, Sir, to dinner;
My mistress and her sister stay for you.

Ant. of S. Now, as I am a Christian, answer me,
In what safe place you have dispos'd my money;
Or I shall break that merry sconce of your's.
Where are the thousand marks thou hadst of me?

Dro. of E. I have some marks of yours upon my pate,
Some of my mistress' marks upon my shoulders,
But not a thousand marks between you both.
If I should pay your worship those again,
Perchance you will not bear them patiently.

Ant. of S. What, wilt thou flout me thus unto my face,
Being forbid?—there take you that, Sir knave!

Dro. of E. What mean you Sir? for Heav'ns sake, hold your hand.

Ant. of S. Provoking slave! [*Walks up the stage.*]

Dro. of E. I have serv'd him from the hour of my nativity to this instant, and have nothing at his hands for my service but blows. When I am cold, he heats me with beating; when I am warm, he cools me with beating: I am wak'd with it when I sleep; rais'd with it when I sit; driven out of doors with it, when I go from home; welcom'd home with it, when I return: nay, I bear it on my shoulders, as a beggar wont her brat; and, I think, when he hath lam'd me, I shall beg with it from door to door. [*Exit.*

Ant.

Ant. of S. Upon my life, by ſome device or other,
The villain is o'er-raught of all my money;
They ſay, this town is full of cozenage:
I'll to the Centaur, to find out the truth—
I greatly fear my money is not ſafe!
O, here he comes again.——

Enter Dromio of Syracuſe.

How now, Sir, is your merry humour alter'd?
As you love ſtrokes, ſo anſwer me again.

Dro. of S. What anſwer, Sir?

Ant. of S. Even that thou gav'ſt me not a minute ſince.

Dro. of S. I did not *ſee* you ſince you ſent me hence
Home to the Centaur, with the gold you gave me.

Ant. of S. Villain, thou didſt deny the gold's receipt—
And told'ſt me of a miſtreſs, and a dinner—
For which, I hope, you felt I was diſpleas'd——

Dro. of S. I'm glad to ſee you in this merry vein;
What means this jeſt?——

Ant. of S. Is it a jeſt? I'll crack another, then.

[*Beats him.*

Dro. of S. Hold, Sir, for Heav'n's ſake! now your jeſt is earneſt.
Upon what bargain do you give it me?

Ant. of S. If you will jeſt with me, know my aſpect,
And faſhion your demeanor to my looks—
Or, I will beat this method in your ſconce.

Dro. of S. Sconce, call you it? So you wou'd leave beating, I had rather have it a head.—An you uſe theſe blows long, I muſt get a ſconce for my head, and inſconce it too—or elſe I ſhall ſeek my wit in my ſhoulders. But I pray, Sir, why am I beaten?

Ant. of S. Doſt thou not know?

Dro. of S. Nothing, Sir, but that I am beaten.

Ant. of S. Shall I tell you why?

Dro. of S. Ay, Sir, and wherefore; for, they ſay, every why hath a wherefore.

Ant. of S. Why, firſt, for flouting me; and then, wherefore,
For urging it the ſecond time to me.

Dro. of S. Was there ever any man thus beaten out of ſeaſon?
Well, Sir, I thank you.

Ant. of S. Thank me, Sir! For what?

Dro. of S. Marry, Sir, for this ſomething that you gave me for nothing.

Ant. of S. Well, Sir, learn to jeſt in good time. There's a time for all things.

Dro. of S. I durſt have deny'd that, before you were ſo choleric.

Ant. of S. But ſoft, who wafts us yonder?

Enter Adriana *and* Luciana.

Adr. Ay, ay, Antipholis, look ſtrange and frown—
Some other miſtreſs hath thy ſweet aſpects;
I've loſt thy heart—I am a ſlighted thing—
I am now not Adriana, nor thy wife!

Ant. of S. What means all this?—
Wife! ſaid ſhe, Dromio?

Dro. of S. Yes, Sir, and I ſuppoſe the other's *mine*.

Luc. Fie, brother, how the world is chang'd with you!
When were you wont to uſe my ſiſter thus?
She ſent for you by Dromio home to dinner.

Dro. of S. By me!

Adr. By thee—and didſt thou not return,
That he did buffet thee, and in his blows
Deny'd me for his wife?

Ant. of S. Did you converſe, Sir, with this gentlewoman?

Dro. of S. I, Sir?—I never ſaw her till this time.

Ant. of S. Villain, thou lieſt; for juſt ſuch words as her's
Didſt thou deliver me on this very ſpot.

Dro. of S. Sir, I never ſpoke with her in all my life!

Ant. of S. How can ſhe then thus call us by our names,
Unleſs it be by inſpiration?——

Dro. of S. Yes, 'tis by conjuration.

Adr. How ill agrees it with your character
To counterfeit thus groſsly with your ſlave,
Abetting him to thwart me in my mood;
Fie, huſband, fie!——

Ant. of S. What error drives our eyes and ears amiſs?
What, was I marry'd to her in my ſleep?

Adr. Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,
Nor ſhall you leave me thus, Antipholis;
I ſee you want to put a trick upon me.
Come, Sir, to dinner; Dromio, keep the gate.—
Huſband, I'll keep you to myſelf to-day,

[*Leaning fondly upon him,*

And punish you for seeming not to know me.

Luc. Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner.

Dro. of S. Yes, Madam, when I know where 'tis you lodge.—

Adr. Sirrah, if any ask you for your master,
Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter:
Come, sister—Dromio, play the porter well.

Dr. of S. I'm to be porter, master, at the gate!

Adr. Come, come, my love.—

Luc. Brother, we dine too late.

[*Exit* Antipholis *between* Adriana *and* Luciana.

Dro. of S. [*looking after them.*] This is the fairy-land. O spight of spights,
We surely are to dine with elves and sprights.
Well, if they give me not enchanted food,
I'll prove my courage and my stomach good. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *The Street before the House of* Antipholis *of* Ephesus.

Enter Antipholis of Ephesus, Dromio of Ephesus, Angelo, *and* Balthazar.

Ant. of E. Good signior Angelo, you must excuse us,
My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours.
Say that I linger'd with you at your shop,
To see the making of the toy I spoke for.
But here's a drunken slave wou'd face me down
He met me on the mart, and that I beat him,
And charg'd him with a thousand marks in gold.

Dro. of E. Indeed you did, Sir;
If my skin were parchment, and the blows you gave me were ink, your own hand-writing wou'd bear witness to it.

Ant. of E. Sirrah, you are an ass.

Dro. of E. Yes, 'tis plain I am a beast of burden.

[*Feeling his shoulders.*

Ant. of E. Gentlemen, come on—I wish our cheer within
May answer my good will, and your good welcome.
Dromio, go on, and bid them let us in.

Dro. of E. Maud, Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian!

Dro. of S. [*within.*] Drone, malt-horse, capon, coxcomb, idiot!——
Dost thou conjure for wenches, that thou call'st for such store—when one is one too many?—

Thou

Thou miſtak'ſt the houſe, go get thee from our gate.

Dro. of E. What fool is made our porter?——My maſter ſtays in the ſtreet!

Dro. of S. Let him walk from whence he came, then, leſt he catch cold in his feet.

Ant. of E. Who talks within there?—Ho, open the door.

Dro. of S. When, Sir, can you tell?

Ant. of E. What can this mean?——

What art thou that keep'ſt me out of my houſe?

Dro. of S. The porter for this time, Sir, and my name is Dromio.

Ant. of E. Dromio!

Dro. of S. Even he, Sir.—

Dro. of E. O villain,

Thou haſt ſtol'n both my office and my name—

Wou'd thou hadſt the beating that belongs to 'em.

Ant. of E. Sure, I but dream!—If, as thou ſay'ſt, thou'rt Dromio,

Go ſend thy miſtreſs hither.

Dro. of S. Sir, my miſtreſs is at preſent engaged with my maſter.

Ant. of E. The devil!

Dro. of E. Maſter, knock the door hard.

Dro. of S. Let him knock till it ake.

[Antipholis *knocks, and muſic plays within.*

Ant. of E. What do I hear? Muſic!——

Dro. of S. Yes, you may dance, Sir—if you like the tune.

Ant. of E. Whoe'er thou art, thou ſhalt repent this inſolence!—

Adr. [*within.*] Who's that at the door that keeps all this noiſe?

Ant. of E. O, are you there, wife?—

Adr. Your wife, Sir knave! ſince when, I pray?

Hence, from the door; you have no buſineſs here.

Ant. of E. Why, don't you know me?——

Adr. No, I thank Heav'n!—go where you're better welcome;

I have no ſpeech for drunkards.

Dro. of S. No, I told you—here we are better employ'd.

Ant. of E. This is beyond all patience!

Go

Go fetch me ſomething, I'll break open the door.

Dro. of S. Break any thing here, and I'll break your knave's pate.——

Ant. of E. [*muſic again.*] Fetch me an iron crow directly.——

Bal. Stay, Dromio—and have patience, Sir——
Herein you war againſt your reputation.——
Then let us to the tavern all to dinner;
And about evening come yourſelf alone,
To know the reaſon of this ſtrange reſtraint.

Ant. of E. You have prevail'd in part.—
I know a wench of excellent diſcourſe;
My wife, but I proteſt without deſert,
Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal;
To her will we to dinner.—Get you home, [*To* Angelo,
And fetch the ring—by this I know 'tis made—
Bring it, I pray you, to the Porcupine;
For there's the houſe—and there will I beſtow it
Upon my pretty hoſteſs;—good Sir, make haſte.

Ang. I'll meet you there in leſs than half an hour.
[*Exit* Angelo.

Ant. of E. Do ſo. [*Muſic again, and a loud laugh in the houſe.*] And for this jeſt of my fair dame's,
I'll puniſh her with my neglect and ſcorn.——
[*Exeunt* Antipholis *and* Balthazar.

Dro. of E. Oh that my maſter had unlock'd the door with an iron crow—then would I have pluck'd a crow with that knave within. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE. *A Chamber in the houſe of* ANTIPHOLIS *of* EPHESUS.

Enter ANTIPHOLIS *of* SYRACUSE.

SURE all is witchcraft! I've been entertain'd
As lord and maſter of a heap of treaſure.——
Juſt now a goldſmith preſs'd on me this ring,
Refuſing payment till ſome future time.
Some men wou'd think them bleſt to be ſo courted,
As I have been, and by ſo fair a lady;
But ſomething in my boſom makes me ſhun

Her

Her charms, and ſhudder at her fond endearments.

Enter Dromio *of* Syracuſe.

Why how now, Dromio where run'ſt thou ſo faſt?

Dro. of S. Do you know me, Sir? am I Dromio? am I your man? am I myſelf?

Ant. of S. Thou art Dromio, thou art my man, thou art thyſelf.

Dro. of S. I am an aſs, I am a woman's man—and beſides myſelf.

Ant. of S. What woman's man, and how beſides thyſelf?

Dro of S. Marry, Sir, beſides myſelf, I am due to a woman; one that claims me, one that haunts me—one that will have me.

Ant. of S. What claim lays ſhe to thee?

Dro. of S. Marry, Sir, ſuch a claim as you would lay to your horſe—ſhe would have me as a beaſt:—not that I being a beaſt, ſhe wou'd have me; but that ſhe being a very beaſtly creature, lays claim to me.

Ant. of S. What is ſhe?

Dro. of S. A very reverend body—for ſhe has a beard like a goat. I have but lean luck in the match, and yet ſhe's a wondrous fat marriage?

Ant. of S. How doſt thou mean a fat marriage?

Dro. of S. Marry, Sir, ſhe's the kitchen-wench, and all greaſe. I know not what uſe to put her to but to make a lamp of her, and run from her by her own light. I warrant her rags and the tallow in them will burn a Lapland winter: if ſhe lives till Doomſday, ſhe'll blaze a week longer than the reſt of the world.

Ant. of S. Ha! ha! ha! What complexion is ſhe of?

Dro. of S. Swart, like my ſhoe—but her face nothing like ſo clean kept.

Ant. of S. What's her name?

Dro. of S. Nell, Sir;—but her name and three quarters (that is, an ell and three quarters) will not meaſure her from hip to hip.

Ant. of S. Then ſhe bears ſome breadth?

Dro. of S. No longer from head to foot, than from hip to hip: ſhe is ſpherical like a globe. Sir, this drudge, or diviner, laid claim to me; call'd me Dromio, ſwore I was aſſur'd to her; told me what privy marks I had about me, as the marks of my ſhoulder, the mole in my neck,

neck, the great wart on my left arm, that I, amaz'd, ran from her as a witch.

Ant. of S. Go, haſte to the road,
And if the wind blow any way from ſhore,
I will not harbour in this town to-night.——
If any bark put forth, come to the mart,
Where I will walk till thou return to me.
Haſte, Dromio, haſte. [*Exit.*

Dro. of S. Yes, Sir——
As from a bear a man would run for life,
I fly the monſter, that wou'd be my wife. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter Angelo, *Second* Merchant, *and an Officer.*

2 *Mer.* You know ſince Pentecoſt the ſum is due;
Therefore make preſent ſatisfaction,
Or I'll attach you by this officer.

Ang. Even juſt the ſum that I do owe to you
Is growing to me by Antipholis;
Pleaſe you but walk with me down to his houſe,
I will diſcharge my bond, and thank you too.

Officer. That labour you may ſave; ſee where he comes.

Enter Antipholis of Epheſus *and* Dromio of Epheſus.

Ant. of E. While I go to the goldſmith's houſe, go thou and buy a rope's end; that will I beſtow among my wife's confederates, for locking me out of doors to-day. [*Exit* Dromio.

Ant. of E. [*ſeeing* Angelo.] A man is well holp up that truſts to you.
I promis'd me your preſence and the jewel.

Ang. Saving your merry humour, here's the note of it,
Which does amount to three odd ducats more
Than I ſtand debted to this gentleman:
I pray you ſee him preſently diſcharg'd;
For he is bound to ſea, and ſtays but for it.

Ant. of E. I am not furniſh'd with the preſent money;
Beſides, I have ſome buſineſs in the town:
Good ſignior, take the ſtranger to my houſe,
And with you take the ring, and bid my wife
Diſburſe the ſum on the receipt thereof;
Perchance, I will be there as ſoon as you.

Ang. Then you will bring the ring to her yourſelf?

Ant.

Ant. of E. No; bear it with you, leſt I come not time enough.

Ang. Well, Sir, I will: have you the ring about you?

Ant. of E. An if I have not, Sir, I hope you have,
Or elſe you may return without your money.

Ang. Nay, come, I pray you, Sir, give me the ring;
Both wind and tide ſtay for this gentleman,
And I, to blame, have held him here too long.

Ant. of E. What now, you uſe this dalliance to excuſe
Your breach of promiſe to the Porcupine.

2 *Mer.* The hour ſteals on; I pray you, Sir, diſpatch.

Ang. You hear how he importunes me; the ring—

Ant. of E. Why, give it to my wife, and fetch your money.

Ang. You know I gave it *you*, not half an hour ſince.

Ant. of E. You gave me none; you wrong me much to ſay ſo.

Ang. You wrong me more, Sir, in denying it.
Conſider how it ſtands upon my credit.

2 *Mer.* Well, officer, arreſt him at my ſuit.

Offi. I do, and charge you in the duke's name to obey.

Ang. This touches me in reputation!—
Either conſent to pay the ſum for me,
Or I'll attach you by this officer.

Ant. of E. Conſent to pay for that I never had!
Arreſt me, fooliſh fellow, if thou dar'ſt.——

Ang. Here is thy fee—arreſt him, officer.
I wou'd not ſpare my brother in this caſe.

Offi. I do arreſt you, Sir; you hear the ſuit.

Ant. of E. I do obey thee till I give thee bail;—
But, ſirrah, you ſhall buy this ſport as dear
As all the metal in your ſhop will anſwer.

Ang. Sir, Sir, I ſhall have law in Epheſus,
To your notorious ſhame, I doubt it not.

[*Exeunt* Angelo *and* Merchant.

Enter Dromio of Syracuſe.

Dro. of S. Maſter, there is a bark of Epidamnum,
That ſtays but for her owner and yourſelf,
Then, Sir, ſhe bears away.—

Ant. of E. How now! the ſlave is either drunk or mad.
What ſhip of Epidamnum ſtays for me?

Dro. of S. A ſhip you ſent me to, to hire waſtage.

Ant.

Ant. of E. Thou drunken ſlave, I ſent thee for a rope;
And told thee to what purpoſe, and what end.

Dro. of S. You ſent me for a rope's end, as ſoon;
You ſent me to the bay, Sir, for a bark.

Ant. of E. I will debate this matter at more leiſure.
To Adriana, villain, hie thee ſtrait;
Give her this key, and tell her in the deſk
There is a purſe of ducats,—let her ſend it;
Tell her I am arreſted in the ſtreet,
And that ſhall bail me—hie thee, ſlave, be gone!
On, officer, to priſon, till it come.

[*Exeunt* Antipholis *and* Officer.

Dro. of S. (*ſolus.*) To Adriana?——that is where we dined in the next ſtreet—but does he think ſhe will give him a purſe of ducats for eating up her proviſions?——No, no, he was not civil enough for that.—In my ſimple judgment, he is as mad as a March hare—and ſo I ſhall tell Madam—for go, I muſt—Would I were out of this town—though I have met with a number of old acquaintances—whom indeed I never ſaw in my life before—A taylor juſt now haul'd me into his ſhop, and took meaſure of me for a coat and doublet—then there's the mountain of fleſh that lays claim to my ſweet perſon, and wou'd fain ſolace me with her wondrous charms—For certain they are *all* mad—and if Mrs Adriana ſends the money,—why ſhe will be maddeſt of 'em all. [*Exit.*

Enter Antipholis of Epheſus *and* Officer.

Ant. of E. Fear me not, man, I will not break away;
I'll give thee, ere I leave thee, ſo much money,
To warrant thee, as I am 'reſted for.
My wife is in a wayward mood to-day,
And will not lightly truſt the meſſenger.
That I ſhould be attached in Epheſus,
I tell you, 'twill ſound harſhly in her ears.—
Here comes my man—I think he brings the money.

Enter Dromio of Epheſus.

How now, Sir, have you that I ſent you for?

Dro. of E. Yes, Sir, I have it. [*Feeling for it.*

Ant. of E. 'Tis well, good Dromio.

Dro of E. Here's that, I warrant you, will pay them all! [*Giving a rope.*

Ant. of E. But where's the money?

Dro. of E. Why, Sir, I gave the money for the rope.

Ant. of E. Five hundred ducats, villain, for a rope!

Dro. of E. I'll ſerve you, Sir, five hundred at that rate.

Ant. of E. To what end did I ſend thee home?——

Dro. of E. To a rope's end, Sir—and to that end am I return'd.

Ant. of E. And to that end, Sir, will I welcome thee! [*Beats Dromio.*

Off. Good Sir, be patient.

Dro. of E. Nay, 'tis for me to be patient; I am in adverſity.

Ant. of E. Thou whoreſon, ſenſeleſs villain!——

Dro. of E. I wou'd I were ſenſeleſs, Sir, that I might not feel your blows.—

Ant. of E. Come, go along, my wife is coming yonder.

Enter Adriana, Luciana, Hoſteſs, Pinch, *and Attendants.*

Dro. of E. Miſtreſs, *reſpice finem*, reſpect your end—or rather beware the rope's end.

Ant. of E. Wilt thou ſtill prate? [*Beats him again.*

Luc. It is as you were warn'd—your huſband's mad!

Hoſ. I knew it by his conduct at my houſe.

Adr. Good Doctor Pinch, I prithee ſpeak to him.

Luc. Alas, how fiery and how ſharp he looks!

Pinch. Give me your hand, and let me feel your pulſe.

Ant. of E. There. [*Striking him.*

Pinch. He is poſſeſs'd—the fiend is ſtrong within him.

Ant. of E. You minion, you, are theſe your cuſtomers?
Did this companion, with the ſaffron face,
Revel and feaſt it in my houſe to-day,
Whilſt upon me the guilty doors were ſhut?

Adr. Oh, huſband! heav'n doth know you din'd at home.

Ant. of E. Thou haſt brib'd the goldſmith to arreſt me too.

Adr. Alas, I ſent you money to redeem you
By Dromio here, who came in haſte for it.

Dro. of E. Money by me! heart and goodwill you might;
But ſurely, maſter, not a rag of money.

Ant. of E. Went'ſt thou not to her for a purſe of ducats?

Adr. He came to me, and I deliver'd it.

Luc.

Luc. And I am witneſs with her that ſhe did.
Dro. of E. Heav'n and the rope-maker do bear me witneſs
That I was ſent for nothing but a rope.——
Pinch. Miſtreſs, both man and maſter are poſſeſs'd!
Ant. of E. Say, wherefore didſt thou lock me forth to-day?
And why doſt thou deny the bag of gold?
Adr. I did not, gentle huſband, lock thee forth.
Dro. of E. And gentle maſter, I receiv'd no gold;
But I confeſs—that we were both lock'd out.
Adr. Diſſembling villain, thou ſpeak'ſt falſe in both.
Ant. of E. Diſſembling harlot, thou art falſe in all;
But with theſe hands I'll pluck out thoſe falſe eyes,
That would behold me in this ſhameful ſport.
Adr. Oh bind him, bind him, let him not come near me. [*They bind him.*
Pinch. More company! his fever now is high!
Bind Dromio, too.
Ant. of E. What, will you murder me?—Thou, officer, I am thy priſoner, wilt thou ſuffer them
To make a reſcue?
Adr. I will diſcharge the debt——
Good maſter doctor, ſee him ſafe convey'd
Home to my houſe——Oh moſt unhappy day!
Ant. of E. Oh moſt unhappy ſtrumpet!
Dro. of E. Maſter,—I am here enter'd in bond for you.
Ah—— [*They ſtop his mouth.*
Pinch. Both mad—both very mad!——
Adr. Luc. Alas, poor ſouls! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE, *A Street before a Priory.*

Enter ANGELO *and Second* MERCHANT.

Ang. I'M ſorry, Sir, that I have hinder'd you;
But I proteſt he had the ring of me,
Though moſt diſhoneſtly he doth deny it.
2 *Mer.* Speak ſoftly; yonder, as I think, he comes.
Ang. 'Tis ſo, and that ſame ring upon his finger.
I'll ſpeak to him.

[*Enter* Antipholis *and* Dromio of Syracuſe.]

Signior Antipholis, I wonder much
That thou would put me to this ſhame and trouble;
That ring you had of me, can you deny it?

Ant. of S. I think I had; I never did deny it.

Ang. Yes, that you did, Sir, and foreſwore it too.

2 *Mer.* Fie on thee, wretch! 'tis pity that thou liv'ſt
To walk where any honeſt men reſort.

Ant. of S. Thou art a villain to impeach me thus;
I'll prove my honour and my honeſty
Againſt thee preſently, if thou dar'ſt to ſtand.

2 *Mer.* I dare, and do defy thee for a villain. [*They fight.*

Enter Adriana, Luciana, Hoſteſs, &c.

Adr. Hold, hurt him not, for heav'n's ſake! he is mad.
Some get within him, take his ſword away:
Bind Dromio too.

[*They attempt to diſarm him, but he keeps them off.*]

Dro. of S. Run, maſter, run—for heav'n's ſake, take a houſe;
This is ſome priory——in, or we are ſpoil'd.

[*Exeunt* Antipholis *and* Dromio *to the Priory.*

Adr. Alas, alas, how came they looſe again?

Luc. Let's call more help to have them bound anew.

Enter Lady Abbeſs *from the Priory.*

Abb. Be quiet, people, wherefore throng you hither?

Adr. To fetch my poor diſtracted huſband hence.

Ang. I thought he was not in his perfect wits.

Abb. How long hath this poſſeſſion held the man?

Adr. This week he hath been heavy, ſour, and ſad;
But till this afternoon his paſſion
Ne'er brake into extremity of rage.
Good people, enter, and lay hold of him.

Abb. No, not a creature enter in my houſe.——

Adr. Then let your ſervants bring my huſband forth.

Abb. Neither—he took this place for ſanctuary;
And it ſhall privilege him from your hands,
Till I have brought him to his wits again,
Or loſe my labour in eſſaying it:
Therefore depart, and leave him here with me.

Adr. I will not hence, and leave my huſband here,
And ill it doth beſeem your holineſs
To ſeparate the huſband and the wife.

Abb.

Abb. Be quiet, and depart; thou ſhalt not have him.
[*Exit* Abbeſs.

Luc. Complain unto the Duke of this indignity.

Ang. By this, I think, the dial points at five:
Anon, I'm ſure the duke himſelf in perſon
Comes this way to the melancholy vale,
To ſee a reverend Syracuſan merchant,
Who put unluckily into this bay,
Beheaded publicly for his offence.

Luc. See where they come.

Enter Duke, Ægeon, *Jailor*, *Guards*, &c.

Duke. Yet once again proclaim it publicly,
If any friend will pay the ſum for him,
He ſhall not die.

Adr. [*kneeling*,] Juſtice, moſt ſacred Duke, againſt the Abbeſs.

Duke. She is a virtuous and a reverend lady;
It cannot be that ſhe has done thee wrong.

Adr. May it pleaſe your grace, Antipholis my huſband,
This day a deſp'rate fit of madneſs ſeiz'd him:
Once did I get him bound, and ſent him home;
Anon, I know not by what ſtrange eſcape,
He broke from thoſe that had the guard of him,
And here I met him, drawn upon this merchant—
We ſtrove again to bind him; but he fled
Into this abbey, whither we purſu'd him;
And here the abbeſs ſhuts the gate on us,
And will not ſuffer us to fetch him out.——

Duke. Go, ſome of you, knock at the abbey-gate,
And bid the Lady Abbeſs come to me:
I will determine this before I ſtir. [*Exit one to the Priory.*

Enter Meſſenger.

Meſ. O miſtreſs, miſtreſs, fly and ſave yourſelf!
My maſter and his man are both broke looſe,
Beaten us every one, and bound the doctor;
He calls for you, and vows revenge upon you.

Adr. Peace, fool, thy maſter and his man are here.

Meſ. No, miſtreſs, no, my bones can tell he's there.
[*A cry heard.*
Hark, hark, I hear him! Miſtreſs, fly, begone!
[*Exit* Meſſenger.

Enter Antipholis *and* Dromio of Epheſus.

Adr. Amazement all! it is indeed my huſband!—

Ant. of E. Juſtice, moſt gracious Duke, oh grant me juſtice!

Ægeon. Unleſs the fear of death doth make me doat,
I ſee my ſon Antipholis and Dromio! [*Aſide.*

Ant. of E. Juſtice, great Sir, againſt that woman there,
That hath abuſed and diſhonour'd me,
Even in the ſtrength and height of injury.

Duke. Diſcover how, and thou ſhalt find me juſt.

Ant. of E. This day, great Sir, ſhe ſhut the doors upon me,
Whilſt ſhe with harlots feaſted in my houſe.

Duke. A grievous fault. Say, woman, didſt thou ſo?

Adr. No, good my lord—myſelf, he, and my ſiſter,
Did dine together, ſo befal my ſoul!

Luc. Ne'er may I look on day, nor ſleep on night,
But ſhe tells to your highneſs ſimple truth.

Ang. O perjur'd woman! They are both foreſworn.
In this the madman juſtly chargeth them.

Ant. of E. My liege, I am adviſed what I ſay.
This woman lock'd me out this day from dinner:
That goldſmith there was with me at the time,
And parted with me to go fetch a ring,
Promiſing to bring it to the Porcupine,
Where Balthazar and I did dine together.

Ang. My lord, in truth thus far I witneſs him,
That he din'd not at home, but was lock'd out.

Duke. But had he ſuch a ring of thee, or no?

Ang. He had, my lord—and when he ran in *here*,
Theſe people ſaw the ring upon his finger.

Ant. of E. I never came within theſe abbey-walls,
Nor ever ſaw the ring—ſo help me heav'n!

Duke. Why, what an intricate impeach is this!
If here you hous'd him, here he would have been.
You ſay he din'd at home;—the goldſmith there
Denies that ſaying——Sirrah, what ſay you?

Dro. of E. Sir, he din'd with her, there, at the Porcupine.

Hoſ. He did.

Duke. Saw'ſt thou him enter at the abbey here?

Hoſ. As ſure, my liege, as I do ſee your grace.

Why

Duke. Why this is ſtrange—Go call the Abbeſs hither; I think you are all mated, or ſtark mad.

[*Exit one to the* Abbeſs.

Æg. Moſt mighty Duke, vouchſafe me ſpeak a word: Haply I ſee a friend will ſave my life, And pay the ſum that may deliver me.

Duke. Speak freely, Syracuſan, what thou wilt.

Æg. Is not your name, Sir, called *Antipholis*, And is not that your bondman Dromio?

Dro. of E. Within this hour I was his *bondman*, Sir; But he, I thank him, gnaw'd in two my cords.— Now I am Dromio, and his man *un*bound.

Æg. Why look you ſtrange on me? you know me well.

Ant. of E. I never ſaw you in my life till now.

Æg. Oh, grief hath chang'd me ſince thou ſaw'ſt me laſt? But tell me, yet, doſt thou not know my voice?

Ant. of E. Neither.

Æg. Dromio, nor thou?

Dro. of E. No, truſt me, Sir, not I!——

Æg. I am ſure thou doſt.

Dro of E. Ay, Sir? but I am ſure I do not; and whatſoever a man denies, you are now bound to believe him.

Æg. Not know my voice!——Oh time's extremity! Haſt thou ſo crack'd and ſplitted my poor tongue In ſeven ſhort years, that here my only ſon Knows not my feeble key of untun'd cares?—— But ſeven years ſince, in Syracuſa's bay, Thou know'ſt, we parted ——

Ant. of E. I never ſaw my father in my life—— But yet the Duke, and all that know me here, Can witneſs with me that this is not ſo,— For never yet beheld I Syracuſa.

Enter Abbeſs *with* Antipholis *and* Dromio of Syracuſe.

Abb. Moſt mighty Duke, behold a man much wrong'd.

Adr. I ſee two huſbands, or my eyes deceive me!

Duke. One of theſe men is genius to the other! Which is the natural man, and which the ſpirit?

Dro. of S. I, Sir, am Dromio; command him away.

Dro. of E. I, Sir, am Dromio—pray let me ſtay.

Ant. of S. Ægeon, art thou not, or elſe his ghoſt?—

My

My father! [*Falls at Ægeon's feet.*

Dro. of S. O my old master! who hath bound him here?

Abb. Whoever bound him, I will loose his bonds.
Speak, old Ægeon, if thou beest the man
That had a wife once call'd *Æmilia*,
That bore thee at a burden two fair sons:
Oh, if thou beest the same Ægeon, speak——
And speak unto the same Æmilia!——

Æg. If I dream not, thou art Æmilia!——
If thou art she, tell me where is that son
That floated with thee on the fatal raft?

Æmilia. By men of Epidamnum he and I,
And the twin Dromio, all were taken up;
But by-and-by rude fishermen of Corinth
By force took Dromio and my son from them,
And me they left with those of Epidamnum;
What then became of them I cannot tell—
Though sure I'm blest in both my boys again!
[*Embraces her sons.*

Adr. Which of you two did dine with me to-day!

Ant. of S. I, gentle mistress——

Dro. of S. And I secur'd the gate.

Adr. You are my husband, then?

Ant. of E. No, I say nay to that.

Dro. of E. Nor must *that* Dromio be your porter now.——

Ant. of S. Fair sister, it seems these ducats I receiv'd from you; [*To* Adriana.
This ring from you, for which I'll satisfy you:
[*To* Angelo.
I see we still did meet each other's man,
And I was ta'en for him, and he for me.——

Ant. of E. These ducats pawn I for my father here.

Duke. It shall not need, thy father hath his life.

Dro. of S. Master, shall I fetch your stuff from shipboard?

Ant. of E. Dromio, what stuff of mine hast thou embark'd?

Ant. of S. He speaks to me,—*I* am your master, Dromio:
We'll look to that anon—Embrace thy brother;

Go,

Go, get you in there, and rejoice with him.——
[*The Antipholiſes and the reſt of the Company retire up the ſtage.*
Dro. of E. Methinks you are my glaſs, and not my brother.
I ſee, by you, I am a ſweet-fac'd youth:—
Will you walk in?
Dro. of S. Not I, Sir, you are my elder.
Dro. of E. That's a queſtion:
How ſhall I try it?
Dro. of S. We'll draw cuts for the ſenior:
Till then, lead thou firſt.——
Dro. of E. Nay, then, thus—— [*Embracing.*
We came into the world, like brother and brother;
Now let's go hand in hand—
Both.——Not one before another. [*Exeunt.*
Æmilia. Renowned Duke, vouchſafe to take the pains
To go with us into the abbey here,
And hear at large diſcourſed all our fortunes.
The ſtory may be worth a ſerious hearing:
'Twill ſhew the virtuous never ſhou'd deſpair.

The troubles ſent by Heav'n ne'er come amiſs,
They're but deſign'd t'improve our ſenſe of bliſs.

THE

THE DESERTER.

IN TWO ACTS.

By C. DIBDIN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	Drury-Lane.	*Edinburgh,* 1782.
	MEN.	
Henry,	Mr Vernon.	Mr Gaudry.
Ruffet,	Mr Banniſter.	Mr Charteris.
Simkin,	Mr Dibdin.	Mr Hollingſworth.
Skirmiſh,	Mr Parſons.	Mr Knight.
Flint,	Mr Wright.	Mr Taylor.
Firſt Soldier,	Mr Carpenter.	Mr Hallion.
Second Soldier,	Mr Fawcet,	Mr Simpſon.
Third Soldier,	Mr Kear.	Mr Banks.
Fourth Soldier,	Mr Blanchard.	
	WOMEN.	
Louiſa,	Mrs Smith.	Miſs Kirby.
Jenny,	Mrs Wrighten.	Mrs Henderſon.
Margaret,	Mrs Love.	Mrs Charteris.

ACT I.

SCENE, *A Cottage, with a view of the French Camp at a diſtance.*

MARGARET *knitting, and* JENNY *ſpinning, at the door of the cottage:* SIMKIN *and other Villagers come on with baſkets of fruit.*

AIR I.

SIMKIN.

I CAN'T for my life gueſs the cauſe of this fuſs.
Why, there's pipers and fiddlers; while Robin and Harry,
And Clodpole and Roger, and ten more of us,
Have pull'd as much fruit as we are able to carry.

MAR-

MARGARET.

Why, numſkull, that's nothing: her ladyſhip's wine,
All over the village, runs juſt like a fountain;
And I heard the folks ſay, every diſh, when they dine,
Will be ſwimming in claret, madeira, and mountain.

JENNY.

Then for poultry, and ſuch like—good Lord, what a ſtore!
I ſaw Goodman Gander ſix baſkets full cramming;
Then ſuch comfits and jellies! why one ſuch feaſt more
Would certainly breed in the village a famine.

CHORUS.

What the meaning can be
We ſhall preſently ſee,
For yonder's old Ruſſet, who certainly knows;
Be what it will,
Our wiſh ſhall be ſtill,
Joy and health to the Ducheſs, wherever ſhe goes!

Sim. What can all this feaſting be for?

Jen. I'll give you while I wind up this bottom and another, and you ſha'nt find it out.

Sim. Why then if you know ſo well, why don't you tell us what it is?

Jen. Ah, I thought you would none of you gueſs it: this grand feaſting at the Ducheſs's is becauſe the king's coming to the camp.

Marg. Who told you ſo?

Jen. I had it from Gaffer Ruſſet himſelf.

Sim. Does the King come to the camp to day?

Marg. Why, yes; I knew that.

Sim. Then as ſure as can be, I know what will happen.

Jen. Why, what will happen?

Sim. There will be two weddings in the village before to-morrow night.

Marg. How ſo?

Sim. Why, is not Henry, the young ſoldier, to marry Louiſa, Gaffer Ruſſet's daughter, as ſoon as the review's over?

Jen. Not if I can prevent it.

Marg. Well, that's but one wedding!

Sim. Yes, but Jenny can tell you whoſe wedding t'other's to be.

Jen.

Jen. How ſhould I know?

Sim. Ah, you wont ſay any thing before folks, becauſe you're aſham'd!

Jen. What do you mean?

Sim. As if you did not know——

Jen. Not I indeed.

Sim. Why did not you promiſe me, that when Henry married Louiſa, you'd marry me?

Jen. Yes, yes, and I'll keep my word; whenever Henry marries Louiſa, I'll marry you.

Enter Ruſſet *and* Louiſa.

AIR II.

Lou. Why muſt I appear ſo deceitful?
I cannot, dear father, comply:
Ah! could I think him ſo ungrateful,
With anguiſh I ſurely ſhould die.
What ſo tender, at parting, he told me,
Which ſuch joy to my boſom convey'd;
When next he was doom'd to behold me,
Could I think would be this way repaid?

Ruſ. Well, well: But, child—

Lou. Indeed, father, 'tis impoſſible; I never can conſent to ſuch a thing.

Ruſ. Odds heart, Louiſa, there's no harm in it. Neighbours, come round here, I'll tell you the whole affair; you know what a dear good lady the Ducheſs is.

Marg. Ah, ſhe's a dear good lady, indeed, and we all of us ought to do every thing ſhe orders us.

Ruſ. I and my family in particular ought, for many's the good thing ſhe has given me and my old dame; then how kind ſhe was to all my poor children! ſhe ſtood godmother to this, and had her chriſtened after her own name.

Sim. Louiſa.

Ruſ. Well, now we come to the point: Henry, you know, who was bred up with my girl, and intended from his infancy for her huſband, is a ſoldier.

Sim. So he is.

Ruſ. And becauſe ſhe has a value for every thing that belongs to me, this good lady, about three weeks ago,

ſent

ſent to the colonel for his diſcharge, that the young folks may live at home at their eaſe, and be as happy as the day is long.

Marg. That will be charming and comfortable for you, neighbour.

Ruſ. Yes: but now comes the miſchief of it; what has occaſion'd it, I don't know; I never ſaw any harm of the lad, but there are always buſy tongues in this village, doing people ill offices; and ſuch reports, within theſe few days, have reached the Ducheſs's ears, that ſhe is determined to ſee farther into this buſineſs, before ſhe gives Louiſa the portion ſhe promiſed her.

Jen. You may thank me for that. [*Aſide.*

Lou. But he'll be here to-day; and ſo well I know his heart, that I'm ſure he'll clear himſelf to their confuſion who could ſo vilely traduce him.

Jen. Perhaps not. [*Aſide.*

Ruſ. Well, child, I am ſure you can't wiſh it more than I do; nothing has ever pleaſed me ſo much as the thought of your coming together: I wiſh to ſee you married with all my heart; for then I ſhall have nothing to do but to liſten to the prattle of your children, and prepare myſelf to follow poor Dorothy.

AIR III.

My life's three parts diminiſh'd,
And when the ſum is finiſh'd,
The pariſh-bell may toll,
Gra' mercy on my ſoul!
Ding dong!
Swing ſwong!
Methinks my old companions ſay,
That though his hairs are now grown grey,
Old Ruſſet once upon a day,
When all was mirth and jollity,
When ſports went round, and bells did ring,
Could briſkly dance, and blythe could ſing;
And then upon the green to ſee
His ruſtic feats—'twas who but he?
I'd give this bauble, life, away,
Without a ſigh, could I but ſtay
To ſee a little infant care,
Like Henry brave, Louiſa fair;

Could I ſee this, I'd yield, content,
A life, I hope, not badly ſpent.

But as I was telling you, the Ducheſs hearing of theſe reports, is determin'd that we ſhall make a trial of his affections.

Lou. Indeed, father, there's no neceſſity for it; he loves me moſt ſincerely.

Ruſ. Nay, nay, child, I really think your love carries you too much away in this affair; it can do no harm; 'tis only an innocent frolic: you are to make believe as if you were a bride; and let me ſee who—oh, you ſhall be the bridegroom.

Sim. Shall I? I'cod I'm glad of that.

Ruſ. But above all, I muſt inſtruct you, Jenny, in your part; you are to ſit here, and tell Henry, when he comes, that Louiſa and Simkin were married yeſterday.

Jen. The very thing I wiſh'd. [*Aſide.*

Lou. I am vex'd to death that this trick ſhould be play'd him; I can judge by myſelf what he'll feel; if I was told ſuch a thing of him, how miſerable I ſhould be!

Ruſ. But he'll be ſo much the happier when he finds out the deceit, child.

AIR IV.

LOUISA.

Though prudence may preſs me,
And duty diſtreſs me,
Againſt inclination, O, what can they do!
No longer a rover,
His follies are over;
My heart, my fond heart, ſays my Henry is true.
The bee, thus, as changing,
From ſweet to ſweet ranging,
A roſe ſhould he light on, ne'er wiſhes to ſtray;
With raptures poſſeſſing
In one every bleſſing,
'Till torn from her boſom, he flies far away.

Ruſ. Well, well, don't make yourſelf uneaſy; I dare ſay he loves you as ſincerely as you think he does; if ſo, he'll ſoon be undeceived, and we ſhall finiſh the day as happily

happily as we could wiſh: in the mean time, let us think of what we have to do; we are to pretend we came from the church; the fiddles and bagpipes are to go firſt, then the lads and laſſes follow; after which, mind this now, we are to go to the Ducheſs's manſion in grand proceſſion, and there to be feaſted like ſo many princes and princeſſes.

Sim. I'cod that will ſuit me nicely.—But, Gaffer Ruſſet, Jenny ſays you told her the feaſting was to be for the king.

Ruſ. For us and the king; yes, yes, the king, after he and his courtiers have had an entertainment at the Ducheſs's, goes to review the camp, where the ſoldiers are all to appear under arms—Ah, girls! that's what none of you know any thing about; when the king goes to the camp, then's the time—the drums beat—the fifes play—the colours are flying—and—and——Lord——Lord! what a charming thing war is!

Sim. It muſt be then when one comes home again, and it's all over.

Ruſ. There's no life like the life of a ſoldier; and then for love! let the girls take care of their hearts; I remember I won my Dorothy juſt after I came from ſuch a review now as there may be to-day.

Marg. Ah, indeed, the ſoldiers make ſad work with young womens hearts, ſure enough.

Ruſ. And how can it be otherwiſe?

AIR V.

One conduct's for
Both love and war,
The point's to gain poſſeſſion;
For this we watch
The enemy's coaſt,
Till we ſleeping catch
Them on their poſt:
Then good b'ye, form;
The fort we ſtorm,
Make towns or hearts
Surrender at diſcretion.
In love the only battery,
Which with ſucceſs we play

To conquer hearts, is flattery:
No fortreſs can its power withſtand;
Neither cannons, mortars, ſword in hand,
Can make ſuch way.
As 'tis in love, ſo 'tis in war,
We make believe,
Miſlead, deceive;
Pray, what ſerve drums and trumpets for,
Cannons, and all our force of arms,
But with their thund'ring alarms,
To tell, not cover our deſigns?
Can theſe to trenches, breaches, mines,
Blockades, or ambuſcades compare?
No, all agree
That policy
Is the true art militaire.

But, come, come, we muſt go and prepare ourſelves; you have not much time to ſpare, and ſee where he comes hurrying along there; there, now he clambers up yonder hill—well done, faith! Ah, your lovers have no gout to ſtop them. Come, child,—neighbours, come along.

Lou. Cruel father! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Henry.

Afterwards, in the wedding proceſſion, Ruſſet, Simkin, Louiſa, Margaret, Jenny, *and villagers.*

AIR VI.

HENRY.

The nymph who in my boſom reigns,
With ſuch full force my heart enchains,
That nothing ever can impair
The empire ſhe poſſeſſes there.
Who digs for ſtones of radiant ray,
Finds baſer matter in his way:
The worthleſs load he may contemn,
But prizes ſtill and ſeeks the gem.

But I hear muſic! What can this be? All the villagers are coming this way—it ſeems like a wedding—I'll retire——How I envy this couple!

Ruſ. Charming! He has hid himſelf—pretend not to ſee

ſee him—don't turn your head that way—he's looking at you now!

Lou. How cruel, not to let me have one look!

Sim. No, you muſt look at nobody but me now: I am the bridegroom, you know.

Ruſ. Jenny, be ſure you play your part well.

Jen. Never fear me—My part's a much more difficult one than they imagine. [*Aſide.*

Jenny, *who ſits down to ſpinning, and* Henry, *who comes forward during her ſong.*

AIR VII.

JENNY.

Somehow my ſpindle I miſlaid,
And loſt it underneath the graſs:
Damon advancing, bow'd his head,
And ſaid, What ſeek you, pretty laſs?
A little love, but urg'd with care,
Oft leads a heart, and leads it far.
'Twas paſſing by yon ſpreading oak,
That I my ſpindle loſt juſt now:
His knife then kindly Damon took,
And from the tree he cut a bough.
A little love, &c. &c,
Thus did the youth his time employ,
While me he tenderly beheld:
He talk'd of love; I leap'd for joy;
For, ah! my heart did fondly yield.
A little love, &c. &c.

Hen. Good day, young woman.

Jen. *(ſings.)* 'Twas paſſing nigh, &c.

Hen. Young woman!

Jen. *(ſings.)* 'Twas paſſing nigh, &c.

Hen. Pray tell me, what wedding that is?

Jen. What! that wedding?

Hen. Yes.

Jen. Do you want to know whoſe wedding it is?

Hen. Ay, ay.

Jen. What, that wedding that went paſt?

Hen. Yes, yes.

Jen. Why, 'tis a wedding in the village here.

Hen. But whoſe, I aſk you?

Jen. (sings.)

Hen. Are you making a jeſt me? anſwer me, I beg of you.

Jen. Why, I do anſwer you, don't I? *(Sings.)*

Hen. What, again! Whoſe is this wedding? Whoſe is it? Speak, or I'll—did not I ſee amongſt them?—diſtraction!—will you anſwer, you?

Jen. Lord, you are ſo impatient! why then the wedding is Louiſa's, old Ruſſet's daughter, the invalid ſoldier.

Hen. Louiſa's wedding!

Jen. Yes, ſhe was married yeſterday.

Hen. Married! good heavens! Are you ſure of what you ſay? Do you know Ruſſet?

Jen. Do I know him? to be ſure, I do; why he is bailiff to the Ducheſs. What makes you ſo uneaſy? you ſeem as if you had an intereſt in it.

Hen. An intereſt in it! Oh!

Jen. Dear me, if I remember right, you are the young man that every body thought ſhe'd be married to. O la! what wickedneſs there is in the world! I am ſure I very ſincerely pity you.

Hen. I am obliged to you for your concern.

Jen. Nay, it is not more on your account than my own, that I am uneaſy.

Hen. How ſo?

Jen. Why, ſhe was not content with making you miſerable, but ſhe muſt make me ſo too: the vile wretch ſhe's married to has perjur'd himſelf; for he has ſworn a thouſand and a thouſand times to marry me.

Hen. What falſehood and treachery!

Jen. If I was you, I would not bear it quietly; not but ſhe'd brazen it all out, for I tax'd her with it myſelf; and ſhe only laugh'd in my face, and told me that you and I might go mourn together, like two turtles, the loſs of our mates.

Hen. Inſulting creature!

Jen. Yes, and for my part I ſaid to myſelf, ſays I, 'Twould be a good joke to take her at her word: but then again I thought, that though revenge is ſweet, yet people have their likings and their diſlikings; and as for me,

me, to be sure, I can't pretend to such a good young man as you.

Hen. (not regarding her.) Infamous wretch! well might she keep her eyes fix'd upon the ground; but I'll see her, upbraid her with her infidelity, and leave her to the guilty reproaches of her own ungrateful heart.

Jen. Young man——

Hen. (returning) Well, what do you say?

Jen. I believe you did not rightly hear what I said.

Hen. Oh, I have no time for trifling.

Jen. Poor soul, how he takes it to heart! But I must follow him; for if I lose this opportunity, I may not find it easy to get another. But stay, upon second thoughts, if I can make but a tool of Simkin, and by that means alarm Louisa, I shall every way gain my ends; for if she once believes him capable of slighting her, I am sure she has too much spirit ever to see him again.

Enter Simkin.

Sim. Oh, Jenny, I am glad I have found you; what do you think brought me away from Louisa and them?

Jen. I neither know nor care.

Sim. Why, I was afraid you'd be jealous.

Jen. I jealous!

Sim. Why yes, you know, because I pretended to be Louisa's husband.

Jen. No, I'd have you to know I am not jealous; I am only vex'd to think I have been such a fool to listen to you so long, you base creature you.

Sim. If I did not think there was something the matter, by your looking so cross.

Jen. And enough to make one; you know I can't help loving you, and this is the way you return my affection.

Sim. Why, you know 'twas only in play.

Jen. In play! I could see plain enough, how your eyes sparkled upon the bare mention of being the bridegroom.

Sim. Now, Jenny, if you would but hear me speak——

Jen. Speak! get out of my sight, you perjur'd wretch!

wretch! I was fool enough not to credit what I heard of you; but I dare say 'tis all true.

Sim. Why, what did you hear of me?

Jen. That it was you who invented all the reports about Henry.

Sim. Me! as I am a living Christian, Jenny——

Jen. Don't say a word to me; you have made me miserable, and now you want to insult me.

Sim. Indeed I don't; you can't think now how happy I could make you, if you would only hear me three words——

Jen. Don't talk to me of happiness, for I never shall be happy as long as I live.

Sim. How dearly she loves me! what a pity it is she won't let me clear up this affair. [*To himself.*

Jen. And then that demure little minx; oh, I could tear her eyes out! I was always afraid of it, and now I am convinc'd, that her pretended love for Henry was nothing but a contrivance to blind me the easier.

Sim. Dear, dear ——

Jen. But, however, you have both miss'd your aim: for Henry behaves as he ought to do, and holds her arts in contempt; nay, he told me himself he had fix'd his affections on a more worthy object.

Sim. He did!

Jen Yes, he did, and you may go and tell her so; and as for me,

A I R VIII.

Mr Simkin, I'd have you to know,
That for all your fine airs,
I'm not at my last pray'rs,
Not put to it so,
That of course I must take up with you;
For I really, Sir. think, that tho' husbands are few
I need not go far off to seek,
For a better than you any day of the week.
To be sure, I must own, I was foolish enough
To believe all the tenderness, nonsense, and stuff,
Which for ever you dinn'd in my ears;
And when for a while you've been out of my sight,
The day has been comfortless, dreary at night,
And my only companions my tears:

But

But now that's all o'er;
I hate you, despise you, will see you no more.
Exit Jenny

Sim. Why, what the deuce has got hold of her? for my share, I believe all the folks in our village are gone mad—mad! I'cod, I'll be hang'd if any bedlamites are half so mad as folks in love.

'AIR IX.

'The whims of folks in love to know,
'I believe would fairly pose Old Nick;
'This moment fast—next moment slow;
'Now consenting,
'Now repenting,
'Nor at this or that will stick;
'But changing still,
'They wont—they will——
'When they mean Yes, they'll answer No;
'And fume and fret,
'This hour get
'What they dislike an hour ago.
'If you expect to find them here,
'To t'other side they quickly veer;
'The wind and tide,
'In the same mood will longer bide,
'Like two fond turtles side by side:
'This hour they woo,
'And bill and coo!
'Then, by-and-by,
'No reason why,
'They make the devil and all to do. [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes.*

Enter a party of Soldiers, afterwards Henry.

1 *Sold.* I'll tell you, my boys, how the matter stands; if we can but catch hold of him, the *summum bonum* of the thing is this, he'll be first tried and then shot.

2 *Sold.* Yes, but suppose we don't catch hold of him?

3 *Sold.* Why then he'll neither be tried nor shot.

4 *Sold.* No more he won't.

2 *Sold.* But I have been thinking how we shall do to know him.

1 *Sold.* Ay, you are a fool in these matters; I'll tell you how you'll know him; here! here! I've got his name

name and his marks (*reading.*) Hannibald Firebrand, ſix foot and an inch high, of an orange tawny complexion, a Roman noſe, and the letters R. T. burnt in the palm of his hand; the devil's in it if we can miſs him.

3 *Sold.* Well, but you need not have taken all this pains, for you know he was your pot-companion.

1 *Sold.* Faith, I forgot that.

2 *Sold.* And would you go to lift your hand againſt your friend?

1 *Sold.* Againſt my friend! ay, againſt my father, if he was to deſert: but ſtay, ſtand by, perhaps this is he!

[*They draw back.*

Hen. Where ſhall I fly? the unhappy have no friends? all I meet make a ſcoff of my ſufferings.

2 *Sold.* It muſt be him.

1 *Sold.* Keep back.

Hen. Are the inhabitants of this place turned brutes? have they no compaſſion?

1 *Sold.* There, you ſee how it is, none of the people will ſcreen him, they are honeſt, and refuſe to do it; I'll take care the king ſhall know what good ſubjects he has.

Hen. At my home, where I expected to receive ſo kind a welcome, I am ſurrounded with enemies.

1 *Sold.* There! there! he ſays he expected to receive a kind welcome from the enemy.

2 *Sold.* So he does.

Hen. To deſert one ſo kind!

1 *Sold.* Ah, 'twas an infamous thing of you, ſure enough.

Hen. Life is not worth keeping upon ſuch terms, and this inſtant could I lay it down with pleaſure.

1 *Sold.* Mark that!

Hen. I'll go directly, and——

1 *Sold.* [*Stopping him.*] Not ſo faſt, if you pleaſe: Hey! why, this is not the deſerter that's my friend. But no matter, one deſerter's as good as another.

Hen. Do you ſuſpect me for a deſerter?

1 *Sold.* No, we don't ſuſpect you, we know you for one.

Hen. Me!

1 *Sold.*

1 *Sold.* Me! yes, you. How ſtrange you make of this matter! Why, did we not hear you confeſs that you expected a kind welcome from the enemy? I'll tell you what; I am not fond of making people uneaſy, but every word you have uttered will be a bullet in your guts.

Hen. What if I favour this, and ſo get rid of all my woes at once—Oh, Louiſa, you have broke my heart!

1 *Sold* What are you talking to yourſelf about? Come, come, you are a deſerter, and muſt go with us.

Hen. Shall I or not?—by heav'n, I will!—I own it, I am a deſerter—lead me where you pleaſe.

1 *Sold.* There, he confeſſes it, and we ſhall have the reward.

AIR X.

HENRY.

I'll fly theſe groves, this hated ſhade;
Each ſound I hear, each thing I ſee,
Reminds me, thou perfidious maid!
Of vows ſo often made by thee.
Bluſh! bluſh, Louiſa! and look there;
Where's now thy truth? oh, tell me where?
Thy conſtancy's no more;
And like a wretch, by tempeſt toſt,
My peace is gone, nay, hope is loſt,
I ſink in ſight of ſhore!

Firſt and Second Soldier.

Come, brother, come.

Third and Fourth Soldier.

We muſt be gone.

HENRY.

Yes, yes, I'll fly to death—lead on.

Firſt, Second, Third, and Fourth Soldier.

Come then.

HENRY.

And yet, O cruel fate!

Firſt, Second, Third, and Fourth Soldier.

He's deviliſh loth.

HENRY.

A minute ſtay,
One inſtant, e're I'm dragg'd away.

Firſt, Second, Third, and Fourth Soldier.

You have confeſs'd—'tis now too late.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE, *A prison, a table, and some old chairs;* FLINT, *who while he speaks puts the stage in order;* HENRY *walks about disturbed; and afterwards* SKIRMISH, *who comes on as* FLINT *goes off the stage.*

FLINT.

THERE's some water for you to drink; a table and a chair, and yonder's your bed; but if you go on at the rate you have begun, there will be no great trouble in making it.—I *am* a deserter, I *have* deserted; I believe you'll find you had better not have confess'd quite so soon:—why, what a devil of a fellow you must be! But, come, as I said before, there's some water for you; and if you choose to have any thing better—money, d'ye see—you understand me right—for money—and, faith, if you have any, you have no great reason to be sparing of it; for I believe your business will soon be settled—Do you choose any wine?

Hen. No, no.

Flint. Well, very well; if you won't have wine, you must drink water.

Hen. False, false Louisa!—Oh heaven!

Flint. But you seem a little down in the mouth about this business; never mind it, 'twill soon be over; you are to suffer at five: in the mean time I'll send a lodger of mine to you; he'll put you in spirits, by that you have drank a glass together; his name is *Skirmish;* he's a devilish hearty fellow. [*Goes off.*

Hen. That a few hours should sink me from the expectation of so much happiness to this abyss of misery! Perfidious woman!

Skir. Here, my boy; who wants me? who calls for Skirmish? Comrade, did you want me?

Hen. Me! no.

Skir. Why, yes, you did. Ho, ho, house! here, house! we'll have a glass together; as we never saw one another before, we'll now begin to renew our acquaintance.

Hen. Can you tell me if I could get a sheet of writing paper?

Skir. Yes, surely, you shall have that: here, house! house,

houſe, I ſay! where the devil are you all? But hark'ee, friend! what a confounded miſtake you have made here! —a miſtake! damme, you have made two miſtakes! I can prove it: in the firſt place, to deſert at all, was a miſtake; then to confeſs it, oh, damn it, that was a miſtake indeed! I am but a ſilly ignorant fellow; but had I been in your place, had he been my ſergeant, my general, nay, my corporal, I would have ſaid, No, I am no deſerter. No, no, my lad, Skirmiſh ſcorns to deſert.

AIR XI.

Though to have a bout at drinking,
When I hear the glaſſes chinking,
There's nothing but I'd do or ſay.
Yet Skirmiſh ne'er ſhall run away.
For here is his motto, and ſo there's an end:
He's none of your flatt'rers, who fawn and are civil;
But for country, his bottle, his king, and his friend,
Little Skirmiſh would go half-way to the devil.

Soldiers often fickle prove,
Who can know his mind for ever?
We forgive you falſe in love,
But deſerters, never, never,

Enter Flint *with wine.*

Flint. There's a young woman without, aſking for a ſoldier. [*To Skirmiſh.*] I ſuppoſe it muſt be you ſhe wants.

Skir. Yes, yes, 'tis me, I warrant you: let her come in. [*Exit* Flint.] But give me the wine [*ſets the bottle down on ſeeing her.*] [*Enter Louiſa.*] Ah, ah, a ſmart wench, faith!

Hen. Good heavens! what do I ſee? You here!

Lou. Me, Henry!

Hen. Is it poſſible!

Skir. Oh ho, I ſmoke this buſineſs; comrade, I'm off, I'm off; ſhe's your ſiſter, I ſuppoſe, or your couſin; but that's no buſineſs of mine. Madam, no offence, I hope; my name is Skirmiſh, I underſtand what good-breeding is; I'm off, brother ſoldier; faith, ſhe's a fine girl! I'll go and walk a little in the court-yard! d'ye mind me, I'm off—mum.

Hen. This insult, Louisa, is beyond enduring! Is it not enough?—But I will not upbraid you.

Lou. Hear me but a moment!

Hen. Away! don't I know you false?—barbarous, faithless wretch.

Skir. [*coming on.*] Don't mind me; don't let me disturb you; I only come to fetch the wine, for I believe you don't care to drink; will you take a sup? No—well, your servant—I'm off again.

Hen. It is not from your hands, but from your father's, that I shall expect—

Lou. 'Tis true, my father—

Hen. That infamous old man! but go—I have no more to say. Oh, Louisa! I doat upon you still! is it possible you can have entirely forgot me?

Lou. Believe me, Henry!

Hen. But with what assurance—what composure!

Lou. I should not be compos'd, if I was really to blame.

Hen. O thou perfidious woman

Lou. Enjoy your error.

Hen. My error!

Lou. With one word I could convince you.

Hen. With one word! speak it then, if you dare.

Lou. I am not married then.

Hen. Not married!

'*Lou.* 'Twas entirely my father's doings; his scheme too—

'*Hen.* O cruel! 'Tis to no purpose whether 'twas 'you or him.

'*Lou.* The Duchess——

'*Hen.* Don't name her; you dare not show yourself 'to her.

"*Lou.* 'Twas her who order'd the whole affair.

'*Hen.* How!'

Lou. What I tell you is true; some reports to your disadvantage having reached the Duchess, which I then knew, and we have since found, to be false, she ordered this mock-wedding, for such only it was, to prove your affections; so that every thing you saw and heard was contrived on purpose to deceive you, and the whole affair was but a joke.

Hen.

Hen. [*ſitting down in the chair, reſts his hand on the table.*] Was but a joke!

AIR XII.

LOUISA.

'Ah! ceaſe this affliction, your troubles are paſt;
'Of care and diſquiet, that ſigh was your laſt:
'How could you once harbour a doubt of my love?
'The girl you convers'd with, the feaſt, and the reſt,
'The muſic and dancing, was all but a jeſt;
'A frolic, deſign'd your affections to prove.
'Believe me, Louiſa reluctant comply'd,
'Her father commanded—intreaty was vain;
'Or I ſwear by this hand, I would rather have dy'd,
'Than have given my Henry a moment of pain.
'*Hen.* O heavens! my heart will burſt.'

Lou. What means this grief, my love? do you ſtill doubt the truth of what I ſay?

Hen. No, Louiſa; 'tis becauſe I believe you.

Lou. Here's my father. Oh, Sir! I am glad you are come. Aſk him what's the matter; make him tell the cauſe of his diſtreſs.

Enter Ruſſet.

Ruſ. Henry, my dear boy, good day to you; I am overjoy'd to ſee you; well, all matters are clear'd up, and you may take Louiſa for your pains; whenever you will, I give her to you.

Hen. I beſeech you, deſire your daughter to ſtep into the court-yard for a minute or two.

Ruſ. Why ſo?

Hen. Oblige me only; deſire ſhe will.

Ruſ. Louiſa, we have ſomething to ſay to each other; ſtep out for a minute or two, I'll call you back preſently.

Hen. [*taking her hand as ſhe goes out.*] Louiſa, 'tis an age ſince I ſaw you laſt.

Lou. And yet you ſend me away from you already.

Hen. You ſhall come back again immediately.

Ruſ. I was ſurpriſed to hear you was put in priſon, though they tell me 'tis but for a trifle. I am overjoyed to ſee you; the Ducheſs will ſoon get you releas'd, and then—but you ſeem thoughtful.

Hen. Will you promiſe me to do whatever I requeſt?

Ruf. That I will, provided it is in my power.

Hen. I beg of you to take your daughter away with you; we muſt take leave of one another.

Ruf. Why, I know that, don't I? you muſt go back to your regiment.

Hen. Well, return hither two days hence, and aſk for a dragoon named *Skirmiſh*, he will deliver you a letter—and for me—

Ruf. O I know well enough what you mean; you'll be at the camp; the king's to be there.

Hen. Have you command enough of yourſelf not to betray any thing to your daughter of what I am going to tell you?

Ruf. To be ſure, I have.

Hen. I am afraid ſhe'll return before——

Ruf. [*looking out.*] No, no, we are very ſafe.

Hea. This wedding-trick——

Ruf. Yes, 'twas I manag'd it.

Hen. It threw me into deſpair——

Ruf. Good, very good! I knew it would.

Hen. And in my fury——

Ruf. Ha, ha, ha! what, was you furious then? delightful!

Lou. [*running in.*] O cruel father! O unfortunate accident! this wedding has undone us all; he has confeſs'd himſelf a deſerter, and is condemn'd to ſuffer death.

Ruf. What's this I hear?

Hen. She knows it all—O torture!

Ruf. A deſerter! condemn'd! Henry, can this be as ſhe ſays?

Hen. 'Tis but too true.

Ruf. Good heavens!

Enter Flint.

Flint. You are wanted without.

Hen. Me!

Flint. You—you muſt go directly.

Hen. Adieu, Louiſa!

AIR XIII.

HENRY.

Adieu! adieu! my heart will break,
This torment's beyond bearing.

Lou.

LOUISA.

Adieu! ah why, my love? oh ſpeak,
And baniſh this deſpairing.
Give thy Louiſa's pangs relief.

HENRY.

I cannot ſpeak, oh love! oh grief!

HENRY, LOUISA, *and* RUSSET.

Ye pitying powers! ſome comfort ſend:
When will our ſorrows have an end?

Lou. For heav'ns ſake, Sir, where is he gone? who wants him?

Flint. Only ſome friends.

Lou. Surely, it can't be to—

Flint. Oh, no! it is not for that yet—'tis too ſoon yet a while; about five or ſix—perhaps it may be ſeven firſt.

Lou. Oh, ſupport me, Sir!

Ruſ. No, child, we may yet prevent it. I'll go to the Ducheſs and tell her the whole affair.

Lou. She has brought me into this trouble.

Ruſ. I'll ſeek her this inſtant, do you follow me.

[*Goes off.*

Lou. Oh, Sir! on my knees I beſeech you.

Flint. There's no occaſion for kneeling to me; what would you have?

Lou. Is not the king to be at the camp to-day?

Flint. Yes, and what then?

Lou. Tell me, Sir; in ſuch a caſe, 'tis an act of juſtice; the king ſurely will do juſtice.

Flint. Certainly; he never does otherwiſe.

Lou. Alas, Sir! I am poor, ſo very poor——

Flint. That wont hinder it a bit; the king's too good to deſpiſe folks becauſe they are poor.

Lou. But 'tis for you I mean.

Flint For me?

Lou. To thank you with; to intreat you; here is a ſmall ornament, of no great value indeed; I give you this, Sir, I wiſh I had more to give; 'tis ſilver; delay it but till to-morrow.

Flint. Do what, delay it!—[*Looking at the trinket*] hey! it ſeems to me to be hollow; are you ſure 'tis ſilver?

Lou. This ſuſpence is dreadful. [*Goes off.*

Flint. Why, I'll tell you; I can't abſolutely delay his execution, but I'll let him have as much wine as ever he can drink.—What, gone!—Gad, this girl has a generous ſpirit.

Enter Skirmiſh, *who holds a bottle and glaſs in one hand, a ſheet of paper under his arm, and with the other drags in* Simkin.

Skir. Come along, what the devil are you afraid of? Here's a young man who wants to ſee this ſoldier, and the girl that was here: where are they? [*To* Flint.

Flint. She's gone away.

Skir. But where's he?

Flint. He was ſent for out to ſome friends; he'll be here again. [*Exit.*

Sim. If you pleaſe, Sir, I'll follow the gentleman.

Skir. You and I muſt take a glaſs together.—So this ſoldier is your couſin, is he?

Sim. Yes, Sir.

Skir. Sit yourſelf down then—And he was ſent here yeſterday?

Sim. Yes, Sir.

Skir. Well then, ſit down, I tell you.

Sim. But, Sir.

Skir. Sit down, I ſay: ſit down there;—hell and fury, will you ſit down when I bid you? there!—now we'll take a glaſs together; he'll ſoon be here; come, fill.

Sim. Sir, I thank you, but I am not dry; beſides, I don't care much for drinking, without knowing my company.

Skir. Without knowing your company! why, you little ſtarv'd, ſniveling—an't you in company with a gentleman? But drink this minute, or I'll——

Sim. I will, Sir, if you won't be angry.

Skir. Not I; I won't be angry. So you ſay that—

Sim. I, Sir? I did not ſay any thing.

Skir. Well, then, if you did not ſay any thing, ſing:—ſing me a ſong.

Sim. I am not in ſpirits for ſinging.

Skir. Spirits! why, a ſong will raiſe your ſpirits; come, ſing away

Sim.

Sim. But, Sir, I can't ſing.
Skir. Ever while you live, ſing.
Sim. Indeed, Sir, I can't.—
Skir. You can't?—why, then I will.
Sim. Well, but Sir.
Skir. Sit ſtill, I tell you.
Sim. But—I wiſh you, couſin—
Skir. He can't be long now; hear my ſong.

AIR XIV.

Women and wine compare ſo well,
They run in a perfect parallel;
For women bewitch us when they will;
And ſo does wine:
They make the ſtateſman loſe his ſkill,
The ſoldier, lawyer, and divine;
They put ſtrange whims in the graveſt ſkull,
And ſend their wits to gather wool:
Then ſince the world thus runs away,
And women and wine
Are alike divine;
Let's love all night, and drink all day!

There's ſomething like a ſong for you! now we'll ſing together.
Sim. Together?
Skir. Ay, both together.
Sim. But, Sir, I don't know your ſong.
Skir. Why, who the devil wants you to ſing my ſong?
Sim. I never ſaw ſuch a man in my life: how ſhall I get away from him? Sir!
Skir. Well, what d'ye ſay?
Sim. I believe there's ſomebody looking for you yonder.
Skir. Is there?
[*While* Skirmiſh *looks round*, Simkin *takes an opportunity of running off.*]
Skir. O, you young dog! I'll be after you; but ſtay, here comes the poor unfortunate young man his couſin.

Enter Henry.

Skir. How are your ſpirits? take a ſup of this: oh! here's your writing-paper.

Hen.

Hen. Thank you, friend; oh, my heart! I wiſh I could have ſeen Louiſa once more. [*Sits down to write.*

Skir. Ah, you're a happy man, you can write! [*Loud.*] Oh, my curſed ſtars, what a wretched fellow I am!

Hen. Why, what's the matter? [*Looking round,*

Skir. The matter?—Confuſion!—I bluſh to ſay it; but ſince it muſt out, what will you ſay to ſuch a poor, miſerable—and, but for this one misfortune, fit to be a general: if I had known how to write, I might have had a regiment five years ago: but company is the ruin of us all; drinking with one, and drinking with another: Why, now here; I was in hopes *here* I ſhould be able to ſtudy a little; but the devil a bit; no ſuch thing as getting the bottle out of one's hand: ah, if I could hold the pen as I have held the bottle, what a charming hand I ſhould have wrote by this time!

Hen. Skirmiſh, do me one favour.

Skir. What is it?

Hen. May I depend upon you?

Skir. To the laſt drop of my blood.

Hen. Promiſe me to deliver this letter.

Skir. I'll go directly.

Hen. You can't go with it now; you are a priſoner, you know.

Skir. Damn it, ſo I am; I forgot that: well, but to-morrow I ſhall have my liberty; and then—

Hen. A perſon, whoſe name is *Ruſſet*, will be here to inquire after me; deliver it to him.

Skir. May I periſh if I fail!

Hen. Let me ſpeak to you. [*They talk apart.*

Enter Margaret, Jenny, *and* Simkin.

Marg. Yes, yes, you vile huſſy, 'twas all your fault.

Jen. Well, have I not confeſs'd it?

Marg. Confeſs'd it indeed! is not the poor young man going to loſe his life, and all upon your account?

Jen. I own it, I own it; I never ſhall joy myſelf again as long as I live; I ſhall ſee his ghoſt every night.

Sim. And it ſerves you right; and I'll tell you more news for your comfort; I would not marry you, now you have been ſo wicked, if you was worth your weight in gold.

Marg.

Marg. Ah, you need not talk; for you know well enough you was told to run after him to call him back, and you never once offer'd to move.

Sim. Why, how could I? I was the bridegroom, you know.

Jen. See! there he is!

Marg. Bleſs us, how alter'd he looks!

Hen. Good day, aunt; good day, [*to the others.*] Give us leave, brother ſoldier.

Skir. Yes, yes, I'll go! I wont diſturb you; I'll go and ſee what they are doing; I'm afraid no good, for the time draws near.

Marg. Ah, my poor boy! can you forgive us? 'twas all our doing.

Jen. No, 'twas my doing.

Hen. Let us ſay no more about it; 'twas an unfortunate affair: where's Louiſa and her father?

Marg. Ah, poor man, her father came running into the village like one diſtracted; flung himſelf on the ground, tore his hair; we could not get him to ſpeak to us.

Hen. And Louiſa, who has ſeen her?

Sim. We none of us can tell where ſhe is.

Hen. How! no one know where ſhe is gone? ſome accident, ſure, has happened to her!

Marg. Don't afflict yourſelf ſo.

Hen. Aunt, if ſhe is found, I muſt rely on you to comfort her! don't ſuffer her out of your ſight; this is now all the ſervice you can do me; your nephew muſt die; for my ſake, therefore, look upon her as your niece; ſhe ſhould have been ſo in reality.

Marg. I promiſe you.

Hen. I could wiſh to ſee her again.

Enter Flint *and* Skirmiſh.

Flint. Comrade, I am ſorry to bring you bad news, but you muſt now behave yourſelf like a man; the hell-hounds are coming for you.

Hen. Already?

Skir. They are indeed; here, here, you've occaſion enough for it; drink ſome of this.

Hen. I am oblig'd to you,—none. Aunt, adieu! tell

my

my Louiſa, I thought on her to my laſt moment; and —oh, my heart! bear up a little, and I ſhall be rid of this inſupportable miſery.

A I R XVI.

To die, is nothing; it is our end, we know;
But 'tis a ſure releaſe from all our woe:
'Tis from the mind to ſet the body free,
And rid the world of wretched things like me.
A thouſand ways our troubles here increaſe;
While care ſucceeding care deſtroys our peace:
Why fly we then? what can ſuch comfort give?
We ceaſe to ſuffer when we ceaſe to live.

[*During the ſong, a meſſenger comes on, and talks with* Flint.]

'*Marg.* Oh Lord, what ſhall we do? I'd give all I 'have in the world to prevent it.

'*Sim.* And for me, I'd part with the very cloaths 'off my back.

'*Jen.* If you could but ſee Louiſa!

'*Marg.* Ay, if you could but ſee Louiſa!

'*Jen.* We'll give you, Sir, all the money we have, 'if you'll only ſtay till we fetch the young woman that 'was here juſt now.

'*Flint.* Well, I'm ſure nobody can ſay, but as how I 'am always ready to ſerve every body I can:—what 'have you got?

'*Marg.* Why, here's a little piece of gold, and ſome 'ſilver.

'*Jen.* And here's my little ſtock; I'm ſure, every 'farthing.

'*Sim.* And there's all mine.

'*Flint.* Well, good-nature is my pride and pleaſure; 'are you ſure you have given me all?

'*Marg.* I am ſure I have.

'*Jen.* And ſo have I.

'*Sim.* And I too indeed.

'*Flint.* Why then, what ſignifies hiding good news? 'The young man's repriev'd.

'*Hen.* How!

'*Flint.* Here's a meſſenger from the camp.

'*Hen.* Let me ſit down.

'*Marg.*

'*Marg.* I ſhall die with pleaſure.

'*Sim.* Lord, lord, I ſhall leap out of my ſkin.'

Enter Ruſſet.

Ruſ. Where is he? where's my boy, my ſon? Louiſa, Henry, has done it all! Louiſa has ſav'd your life!

Hen. Charming angel! tell me how, dear Sir!

Ruſ. As the army were returning to the camp, aſſiſted in her reſolution by her love for you, to the aſtoniſhment of all who ſaw her, ſhe ruſh'd like lightning thro' the ranks, made her way to the king himſelf, fell at his feet—and, after modeſtly relating the circumſtances of thy innocence and her own diſtreſs, vow'd never to riſe till ſhe obtain'd the life of her lover. The king having heard her ſtory with that clemency which always accompanies a noble mind, granted thy life to her interceſſion; and the pomp paſſed on amidſt the acclamations of the people.

Hen. Charming, generous creature!

Skir. Death and damnation!

Flint. Why, what ails you, Skirmiſh?

Skir. The king at the camp, and I not there!

Sim. I ſhall love my couſin Louiſa for it as long as I live.

Ruſ. The king wept, and the nobles fill'd her lap with money; which ſhe threw to the ground, leſt it ſhould retard her in her way to you.

Hen. How can I reward ſuch tenderneſs!

Ruſ. See, ſee, here ſhe comes.

Enter Louiſa.

Lou. My Henry! [*Falling into his arms*

Hen. My Louiſa!

AIR XVI.

HENRY.

My kind preſerver! fain I'd ſpeak,
Fain would I what I feel expreſs;
But language is too poor, too weak,
To thank this goodneſs to exceſs.
Brothers, companions, age and youth,
Oh, tell to all the world her fame!
And when they aſk for faith and truth,
Repeat my dear Louiſa's name.

LOUISA

LOUISA.

And have I ſav'd my Henry's life?—
Dear father, in my joy take part:
I now indeed ſhall be a wife,
Wife to the idol of my heart.
Thus when the ſtorm, diſperſing, flies,
Through which the ſailor's forc'd to ſteer;
No more he dreads inclement ſkies,
But with the tempeſt leaves his fear.

RUSSET.

Why, why, I pray you, this delay?
Children, your hands in wedlock join,
That I may paſs my hours away
In eaſe and peace through life's decline.
This joy's too great; my pride, my boaſt!
Both, both in my affection ſhare,
May who delights the other moſt,
Henceforward be your only care!

SKIRMISH.

I wiſh your joy may hold you long;
But yet I am not ſuch a ſot,
As not to ſee you all are wrong;
Why is the king to be forgot?
You had been wretched but for him:
Then follow Skirmiſh, dance and ſing;
Raiſe every voice, ſtrain ev'ry limb,
Huzza! and cry, Long live the king!

THE COMMISSARY.

IN THREE ACTS.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

	Hay-Market.
Mr Zac. Fungus,	Mr Foote.
Mr Isaac Fungus,	Mr Costollo.
Mr Gruel,	Mr Shuter.
Young Loveit,	Mr Davis.
Dr Catgut,	Mr Parsons.
Simon,	Mr Preston.
Mr Bridoun,	Mr Gardner.
'Mr Paduasoy,'	Mr Keen,
Mr Harpy,	Mr Tindal.
La Fleur,	Mr Johnson.
John,	Mr Marshall,
A Hackney-Coachman,	Mr Parsons.

WOMEN.

Mrs Mechlin,	Miss Cheney.
Mrs Loveit,	Mr Shuter.
Dolly,	Miss Reynolds.
Jenny,	Mrs Granger.

ACT I.

SCENE, *Mrs* MECHLIN's *House.*

[*Loud knocking at the door.*]

Enter JENNY.

RAP, rap, rap, up-stairs and down, from morning to night; if this same commissary stays much longer amongst us, my mistress must e'en hire a porter. Who's there?

Simon *without.*

Sim. Is Mrs Mechlin at home?

Jen. No. [*Opens the door.*] Oh, what is it you, Simon?

Enter Simon.

Sim. At your ſervice, ſweet Mrs Jane.

Jen. Why, you knock with authority; and what are your commands, Maſter Simon?

Sim. I come, Madam, to receive thoſe of your miſtreſs. What, Jenny, has ſhe any great affair on the anvil? Her ſummons is moſt exceedingly preſſing; and you need not be told, child, that a man of my conſequence does not trouble himſelf about trifles.

Jen. Oh, Sir, I know very well you principal actors don't perform every night.

Sim. Mighty well, Ma'am; but, notwithſtanding your ironical ſneer, it is not every man that will do for your miſtreſs; her agents muſt have genius and parts: I don't ſuppoſe, in the whole bills of mortality, there is ſo general and extenſive a dealer as my friend Mrs Mechlin.

Jen. Why, to be ſure, we have plenty of cuſtomers, and for various kinds of commodities; it would be pretty difficult, I fancy, to——

Sim. Commodities! Your humble ſervant, ſweet Mrs Jane; yes, yes, you have various kinds of commodities, indeed.

Jen. Mr Simon, I don't underſtand you; I ſuppoſe it is no ſecret in what ſort of goods our dealing conſiſts.

Sim. No, no, they are pretty well known.

Jen. And, to be ſure, though now and then, to oblige a cuſtomer, my miſtreſs does condeſcend to ſmuggle a little——

Sim. Keep it up, Mrs Jane.

Jen. Yet there are no people in the liberty of Weſtminſter that live in more credit than we do.

'*Sim.* Bravo.

'*Jen.* The very beſt of quality are not aſham'd to vi-
'ſit my miſtreſs.

'*Sim.* They have reaſon.

'*Jen.* Reſpected by the neighbours.

'*Sim.*

'*Sim.* I know it.

'*Jen.* Punctual in her payments.

'*Sim.* To a moment.

'*Jen.* Regular hours.

'*Sim.* Doubtless.

'*Jen.* Never miss the sarmant on Sundays.

'*Sim.* I own it.

'*Jen.* Not an oath comes out of her mouth, unless now and then when the poor gentlewoman happens to be overtaken in liquor.

'*Sim.* Granted.

'*Jen.* Not at all given to lying, but, like other tradesfolks, in the way of her business.'

Sim. Very well.

Jen. Very well! then pray, Sir, what would you insinuate? Look you, Mr Simon, don't go to cast reflections upon us; don't think to blast the reputation of our——

Sim. Hark ye, Jenny, are you serious?

Jen. Serious! Ay, marry am I.

Sim. The devil you are!

Jen. Upon my word, Mr Simon, you should not give your tongue such a licence; let me tell you, these airs do not become you at all.

Sim. Hey-day! why where the deuce have I got? sure, I have mistaken the house; is not this Mrs Mechlin's?

Jen. That's pretty well known.

Sim. The commodious, convenient Mrs Mechlin, at the sign of the Star, in the parish of St Paul's?

Jen. Bravo.

'*Sim.* That commercial caterpillar?

'*Jen.* I know it.

'*Sim.* That murderer of manufactures?

'*Jen.* Doubtless.

'*Sim.* That walking warehouse?

'*Jen.* Granted.'

Sim. That carries about a greater cargo of contraband goods under her petticoats than a Calais cutter?

Jen. Very well.

'*Sim.* That engrosser and seducer of virgins?

'*Jen.* Keep it up, master Simon.

Sim. That foreſtaller of bagnios?

'*Jen.* Incomparably fine.'

Sim. That canting, cozening, money-lending, match-making, pawnbroking—— [*Loud knocking.*]

Jen. Mighty well, Sir: here comes my miſtreſs, ſhe ſhall thank you for the pretty picture you have been pleaſed to draw.

Sim. Nay, but, dear Jenny——

Jen. She ſhall be told how lightly ſhe ſtands in your favour.

Sim But, my ſweet girl—— [*Knock again.*

Jen. Let me go, Mr Simon; don't you hear?

Sim. And can you have the heart to ruin me at once?

Jen. Hands off.

Sim. A peace, a peace, my dear Mrs Jane, and dictate the articles.

Enter Mrs Mechlin, *followed by a hackney-coachman with ſeveral bundles, in a capuchin, a bonnet, and her cloaths pinned up.*

Mrs Mech. So, huſſy, what, muſt I ſtay all day in the ſtreets? who have we here? the devil's in the wenches, I think—one of your fellows, I ſuppoſe——Oh, is it you! how fares it, Simon?

Jen. Madam, you ſhould not have waited a minute, but Mr Simon ——

Sim. Huſh, huſh! you barbarous jade——

Jen. Knowing your knock, and eager to open the door, flew up ſtairs, fell over the landing-place, and quite barr'd up the way.

Sim. Yes, and I am afraid I have put out my ankle. Thanks, Jenny; you ſhall be no loſer, you ſlut. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Mech. Poor Simon.——Oh, Lord have mercy upon me, what a round have I taken?——Is the wench petrified? why don't you reach me a chair, don't you ſee I am tired to death?

Jen. Indeed, Ma'am, you'll kill yourſelf.

Sim. Upon my word, Madam Mechlin, you ſhould take a little care of yourſelf; indeed you labour too hard.

Mrs Mech. Ay, Simon, and for little or nothing: only victuals and cloaths, more coſt than worſhip.—Why does

does not the wench take the things from the fellow? Well, what's your fare?

Coachm. Miſtreſs, its honeſtly worth half a crown.

Mrs Mech. Give him a couple of ſhillings, and ſend him away.

Coachm. I hope you'll tip me the teſter to drink?

Mrs Mech. Them there fellows are never contented; drink! ſtand farther off; why you ſmell already as ſtrong as a beer-barrel.

Coachm. Miſtreſs, that's becauſe I have already been drinking.

Mrs Mech. And are not you aſhamed, you ſot, to be eternally guzzling? You had better buy you ſome cloaths.

Coachm. No, miſtreſs, my honour won't let me do that.

Mrs Mech. Your honour! and pray how does that hinder you?

Coachm. Why, when a good gentlewoman like you, cries, Here coachman, here's ſomething to drink.——

Mrs Mech. Well!

Coachm. Would it be honour in me to lay it out in any thing elſe? No, miſtreſs, my conſcience won't let me, becauſe why, its the will of the donor, you know.

Mrs Mech. Did you ever hear ſuch a blockhead?

Coachm. No, no, miſtreſs; tho' I am a poor man, I won't forfeit my honour; my cattle, thof I love 'em, poor beaſteſſes, are not more dearer to me than that.

Mrs Mech. Yes, you and your horſes give pretty ſtrong proofs of your honour; for you have no cloaths on your back, and they have no fleſh. Well, Jenny, give him the ſixpence; there, there, lay it out as you will.

Coach. It will be to your health, miſtreſs; it ſhall melt at the Meuſe, before I go home; I ſhall be careful to clear my conſcience.

Mrs Mech. I don't doubt it.

Coachm. You need not Miſtreſs, your ſervant.

[*Exit* Coachman.

Mrs Mech. Has there been any body here, Jenny?

Jen. The gentleman, Ma'am, about the Glouceſterſhire living.

Mrs Mech. He was! Oh oh! what, I ſuppoſe his ſto-

mach's come down. Does he like the encumbrance? will he marry the party?

Jen. Why, that article seems to go a little against him?

Mrs Mech. Does it so? then let him retire to his Cumberland curacy: that's a fine keen air, it will soon give him an appetite. He'll stick to his honour too, till his cassock is wore to a rag.

Jen. Why, indeed, Ma'am, it seems pretty rusty already.

Mrs Mech. Devilish squeamish, I think; a good fat living, and a fine woman into the bargain! You told him a friend of the lady's will take the child off her hands?——

Jen. Yes, Madam.

Mrs Mech. So that the affair will be a secret to all but himself. But he must quickly resolve, for next week his wife's month will be up.

Jen. He promised to call about four.

Mrs Mech. But don't let him think we are at a loss for a husband; there is to my knowledge a merchant's clerk in the city, a comely young man, and comes of good friends, that will take her with but a small place in the custom-house.

Jen. He shall know it.

Mrs Mech. Ay, and tell him that the party's party has interest enough to obtain it whenever he will. And then the bridegroom may put the purchase-money too of that same presentation into his pocket.

Jen. Truly, Ma'am, I should think this would prove the best match for the lady.

Mrs Mech. Who doubts it?—Here, Jenny, carry these things above stairs. Take care of the eigrette, leave the watch upon the table, and be sure you don't mislay the pearl-necklace: the lady goes to Mrs Corneleys's to-night; and, if she has any luck, she will be sure to redeem it to-morrow.

Sim. What a world of affairs! it is a wonder, Madam, how you are able to remember them all.

Mrs Mech. Trifles, mere trifles, Master Simon.—But I have a great affair in hand—Such an affair, if well managed, it will be the making of us all.

Sim.

Sim. If I, Ma'am, can be of the leaſt uſe——

Mrs Mech. Of the higheſt! there is no doing without you.——You know the great——

Enter Jenny.

Jen. I have put the things where you ordered, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. Very well, you may go. [*Exit* Jenny. I ſay, you know the great commiſſary that is come to lodge in my houſe. Now they ſay this Mr Fungus is as rich as an Indian governor; heaven knows how he came by it: but that, you know, is no buſineſs of ours. Pretty pickings, I warrant, abroad. [*Loud knocking.*] Who the deuce can that be? But let it be who it will, you muſt not go till I ſpeak to you.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. The widow Loveit, Ma'am,

Mrs Mech. What, the old liquoriſh dowager, from Devonſhire Square? ſhow her in. [*Exit* Jenny.] You'll wait in the kitchen, Simon, I ſhall ſoon diſpatch her affair. [*Exit* Simon.

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. So ſo, good morning to you, good Mrs Mechlin. John, let the coach wait at the corner.

Mrs Mech. You had better ſit here, Madam.

Mrs Lov. Any where. Well, my dear woman, I hope you have not forgot your old friend—Ugh, ugh, ugh, —[*coughs.*] Conſider I have no time to loſe, and you are always ſo full of employment.

Mrs Mech. Forgot you! you ſhall judge, Mrs Loveit. I have, Ma'am, provided a whole cargo of huſbands for you, of all nations, complexions, ages, tempers, and ſizes: ſo you ſee you have nothing to do but chooſe.

Mrs Lov. To chooſe, Mrs Mechlin! Lord help me, what choice can I have? I look upon wedlock to be a kind of a lottery, and I have already drawn my prize; and a great one it was! My poor dear man that's gone, I ſhall never meet with his fellow.

Mrs Mech. Pſha, Madam, don't let us trouble our heads about him, 'tis high time that he was forgot.

Mrs Lov. But won't his relations think me rather too quick?

Mrs Mech. Not a jot; the greateſt compliment you cou'd pay to his memory; it is a proof he gave you reaſon to be fond of the ſtate. But what do you mean by quick? Why, he has been bury'd theſe three weeks—

Mrs Lov. And three days, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Indeed! quite an age.

Mrs Lov. Yes; but I ſhall never forget him; ſleeping or waking, he's always before me. His dear ſwell'd belly, and his poor ſhrunk legs; Lord bleſs me, Mrs Mechlin, he had no more calf than my fan.

Mrs Mech. No!

Mrs Lov. No, indeed; and then, his bit of a purple noſe, and his little weezen face as ſharp as a razor—don't mention it, I can never forget him. [*Cries.*

Mrs Mech. Sweet marks of remembrance, indeed. But, Ma'am, if you continue to be ſo fond of your laſt huſband, what makes you think of another?

Mrs Lov. Why, what can I do, Mrs Mechlin? a poor lone widow woman as I am; there's nobody minds me; my tenants behind-hand, my ſervants all careleſs, my children undutiful—Ugh, ugh, ugh—— [*Coughs.*

Mrs Mech. You have a villainous cough, Mrs Loveit; ſhall I ſend for ſome lozenges?

Mrs Lov. No, I thank you, 'tis nothing at all; mere habit; juſt a little trick I've got.

Mrs Mech. But I wonder you ſhou'd have all theſe vexations to plague you, Madam, you who are ſo rich, and ſo——

Mrs Lov. Forty thouſand in the four-per-cents every morning I riſe, Mrs Mechlin, beſides two houſes at Hackney: but then my affairs are ſo weighty and intricate; there is ſuch tricking in lawyers, and ſuch torments in children, that I can't do by myſelf; I muſt have a helpmate; quite neceſſity, no matter of choice.

Mrs Mech. Oh, I underſtand you, you marry merely for convenience; juſt only to get an aſſiſtant, a kind of a guard, a fence to your property?

Mrs Lov. Nothing elſe.

Mrs Mech. I thought ſo; quite prudential; ſo that age is none of your object: you don't want a ſcampering, giddy, ſprightly, young——

Mrs

Mrs Lov. Young! Heaven forbid. What, do you think, like ſome ladies I know, that I want to have my huſband taken for one of my grandchildren? no, no; thank Heaven, ſuch vain thoughts never enter'd my head.

Mrs Mech. But yet, as your matters ſtand, he ought not to be ſo very old neither; for inſtance now, of what uſe to you wou'd be a huſband of ſixty?

Mrs Lov. Sixty! Are you mad, Mrs Mechlin? what, do you think I want to turn nurſe?

Mrs Mech. Or fifty-five?

Mrs Lov. Ugh, ugh, ugh——

Mrs Mech. Or fifty?

Mrs Lov. Oh! that's too cunning an age; men, now-a-days, rarely marry at fifty, they are too knowing and cautious.

Mrs Mech. Or forty-five, or forty, or—

Mrs Lov. Shall I, Mrs Mechlin, tell you a piece of my mind?

Mrs Mech. I believe, Ma'am, that will be your beſt way.

Mrs Lov. Why then, as my children are young and rebellious, the way to ſecure and preſerve their obedience will be to marry a man that won't grow old in a hurry.

Mrs Mech. Why, I thought you declar'd againſt youth?

Mrs Lov. So I do, ſo I do; but then, ſix or ſeven and twenty is not ſo very young, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. No, no, a pretty ripe age: for at that time of life men can buſtle and ſtir; they are not eaſily check'd, and whatever they take in hand they go through with.

Mrs Lov. True, true.

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, it is then they may be ſaid to be uſeful; it is the only tear and wear ſeaſon.

Mrs Lov. Right, right.

Mrs Mech. Well, Ma'am, I ſee what you want; and to-morrow about this time, if you'll do me the favour to call——

Mrs Lov. I ſhan't fail.

Mrs

Mrs Mech. I think I can ſuit you.

Mrs Lov. You'll be very obliging.

Mrs Mech. You may depend upon't, I'll do my endeavours.

Mrs Lov. But, Mrs Mechlin, be ſure don't let him be older than that, not above ſeven or eight and twenty at moſt; and let it be as ſoon as you conveniently can.

Mrs Mech. Never fear, Ma'am.

Mrs Lov. Becauſe, you know, the more children I have by the ſecond venter, the greater plague I ſhall prove to thoſe I had by the firſt.

Mrs Mech. True, Ma'am. You had better lean on me to the door: but, indeed, Mrs Loveit, you are very malicious to your children, very revengeful, indeed.

Mrs Mech. Ah, they deſerve it; you can't think what ſad whelps they turn out; no puniſhment can be too much; if their poor father cou'd but have foreſeen they wou'd have——why did I mention the dear man? it melts me too much. Well, peace be with him.—— To-morrow about this time, Mrs Mechlin, will the party be here, think you?

Mrs Mech. I can't ſay.

Mrs Lov. Well, a good day, good Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Here, John, take care of your miſtreſs. [*Exit* Mrs Loveit.

A good morning to you, Ma'am. Jenny, bid Simon come up.—A huſband! there now is a proof of the prudence of age; I wonder they don't add a clauſe to the act to prevent the old from marrying clandeſtinely as well as the young. I am ſure there are as many unſuitable matches at this time of life as the other.

Enter Simon.

Shut the door, Simon. Are there any of Mr Fungus's ſervants below?

Sim. Three or four ſtrange faces.

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, ſome of that troop, I ſuppoſe; come, Simon, be ſeated.—Well, Simon, as I was telling you; this Mr Fungus, my lodger above, that has brought home from the wars a whole cart-load of money, and who (between you and I) went there from very little better than a driver of carts——

Sim. I formerly knew him, Ma'am.

Mrs

Mrs Mech. But he does not know you?

Sim. No, no.

Mrs Mech. I am glad of that—this ſpark, I ſay, not content with being really as rich as a lord, is determin'd to rival them too in every other accompliſhment.

Sim. Will that be ſo eaſy? why he muſt be upwards of—

Mrs Mech. Fifty, I warrant.

Sim. Rather late in life to ſet up for a gentleman.

Mrs Mech. But fine talents, you know, and a ſtrong inclination.—

Sim. That, indeed—

Mrs Mech. Then, I promiſe you, he ſpares for no pains.

Sim. Diligent!

Mrs Mech. Oh, always at it. Learning ſomething or other from morning to night; my houſe is a perfect academy, ſuch a throng of fencers, dancers, riders, muſicians—but, however, to ſweeten the pill, I have a fellow-feeling for recommending the teachers.

Sim. No doubt, Ma'am; that's always the rule.

Mrs Mech. But one of his ſtudies is really diverting, I own I can't help laughing at that.

Sim. What may that be?

Mrs Mech. Oratory.—You know his firſt ambition is to have a ſeat in a certain aſſembly; and in order to appear there with credit, Mr What d'ye Call'um, the man from the city, attends every morning to give him a lecture upon ſpeaking, and there is ſuch haranguing and bellowing between them—Lord have mercy upon—but you'll ſee enough on't yourſelf; for, do you know, Simon, you are to be his valet de chambre?

Sim. Me, Madam!

Mrs Mech. Ay, his privy counſellor, his confident, his director in chief.

Sim. To what end will that anſwer?

Mrs Mech. There I am coming—You are to know, that our Squire Wou'd-be is violently bent upon matrimony; and nothing, forſooth, will go down but a perſon of rank and condition.

Sim. Ay, ay, for that piece of pride he's indebted to Germany.

Mrs Mech. The article of fortune he holds in utter con-

contempt, a grand alliance is all that he wants; ſo that the lady has but her veins full of high blood, he does not care two-pence how low and empty her purſe is.

Sim. But, Ma'am, won't it be difficult to meet with a ſuitable ſubject? I believe there are few ladies of quality that——

Mrs Mech. Oh, as to that, I am already provided.

Sim. Indeed!

Mrs Mech. You know my niece Dolly?

Sim. Very well.

Mrs Mech. What think you of her?

Sim. Of Miſs Dolly, for what?

Mrs Mech. For what? you are plaguily dull; why, a woman of faſhion, you dunce.

Sim. To be ſure Miſs Dolly is very deſerving, and few ladies have a better appearance; but, bleſs me, Madam, here people of rank are ſo generally known, that the ſlighteſt inquiry wou'd poiſon your project.

Mrs Mech. Oh, Simon, I have no fears from that quarter; there, I think, I am pretty ſecure.

Sim. If that, indeed, be the caſe.—

Mrs Mech. In the firſt place, Mr Fungus has an entire reliance on me.

Sim. That's ſomething.

Mrs Mech. Then to baffle any idle curioſity, we are not derived from any of your new-fangled gentry, who owe their upſtart nobility to your Harrys and Edwards. No, no, we are ſcions from an older ſtock; we are the hundred and fortieth lineal deſcendent from Hercules Alexander, earl of Glendower, prime miniſter to king Malcolm the Firſt.

Sim. Odſo! a qualification for a canon of Straſburg. So then, it ſeems, you are tranſplanted from the banks of the Tweed; cry you mercy! But how will Miſs Dolly be able to manage the accent?

Mrs Mech. Very well; ſhe was two years an actreſs in Edenborough.

Sim. That's true; is the overture made, has there been any interview?

Mrs Mech Several: we have no diſlike to his perſon; can't but own he is rather agreeable; and as to his propoſals, they are greater than we cou'd deſire: but

we

we are prudent and careful, say nothing without the Earl's approbation.

Sim. Oh, that will be easily had.

Mrs Mech. Not so easily, and now comes your part: but first, how goes the world with you, Simon?

Sim. Never worse! The ten bags of tea, and the cargo of brandy, them peering rascals took from me in Sussex, has quite broken my back.

Mrs Mech. Poor Simon! why then I am afraid there's an end of your traffic.

Sim. Totally: for, now those fellows have got the Isle of Man in their hands, I have no chance to get home, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Then you are entirely at leisure?

Sim. As a Bath turnspit in the month of July.

Mrs Mech. You are then, Simon, an old family-servant in waiting here on the lady; but dispatch'd to the North with a view to negociate the treaty, you are just returned with the noble Peer's resolution. Prepare you a suitable equipage, I will provide you with a couple of letters, one for the lover and one for the lady.

Sim. The contents?——

Mrs Mech. Oh, you may read them within: now with regard to any questions, I will furnish you with suitable answers; but you have a bungler to deal with, so your cards will be easily play'd.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. Miss Dolly, Ma'am, in a hackney coach at the corner; may she come in?

Mrs Mech. Are the servants out of the way?

Jen. Oh, she is so muffled up and disguised, that she'll run no danger from them.

Mrs Mech. Be sure keep good watch at the door, Jenny.

Jen. Oh, never fear, Ma'am. [*Exit* Jenny.

Mrs Mech. Simon, take those two letters that are under the furthermost cushion in the window; run home, get a dirty pair of boots on, a great coat, and a whip, and be here with them in half an hour at farthest.

Sim. I will not fail. But have you no farther directions?

Mrs Mech. Time enough. I shall be in the way;

for it is me that muſt introduce you above. [*Exit* Simon.] So, things ſeem now in a pretty good train; a few hours, it is to be hoped, will make me eaſy for life. To ſay truth, I begin to be tir'd of my trade. To be ſure, the profits are great; but then, ſo are the riſks that I run: beſides, my private practice begins to be ſmok'd. Ladies are ſuppos'd to come here with different deſigns than merely to look at my goods: ſome of my beſt cuſtomers, too, are got out of my channel, and manage their matters at home by their maids. Thoſe aſylums, they give a dreadful blow to my buſineſs. Time has been, when a gentleman wanted a friend, I could ſupply him with choice in an hour; but the market is ſpoiled, and a body might as ſoon produce a hare or a partridge as a pretty———[*Enter* Dolly.]——So, niece, are all things prepar'd; have you got the papers from Harpy?

Dol. Here they are, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. Let me ſee—Oh the marriage-articles for Fungus to ſign. Have you got the contract about you?

Dol. You know, aunt, I left it with you.

Mrs Mech. True, I had forgot: but where is the bond that I——Here it is; this, Dolly, you muſt ſign and ſeal before witneſs.

Dol. To what end, aunt?

Mrs Mech. Only, child, a trifling acknowledgment for all the trouble I have taken; a little hint to your huſband, that he may reimburſe your poor aunt, for your cloaths, board, lodging, and breeding.

Dol. I hope my aunt does not ſuſpect that I can ever be wanting——

Mrs Mech. No, my dear, not in the leaſt: but it is beſt, Dolly, in order to prevent all retroſpection, that we ſettle accounts before you change your condition.

Dol. But, Ma'am, may not I ſee the contents?

Mrs Mech. The contents, love? of what uſe will that be to you? Sign and ſeal, that's enough.

Dol. But, aunt, I chooſe to ſee what I ſign.

Mrs Mech. To ſee! what, then you ſuſpect me?

Dol. No, Ma'am; but a little caution——

Mrs Mech. Caution! Here's an impudent baggage! How dare you diſpute my commands? have not I made

you,

you, raiſed you from nothing, and won't a word from my mouth reduce you again?

Dol. Madam, I——

Mrs Mech. Anſwer me, huſſy, was not you a beggar's brat at my door; did not I, out of compaſſion, take you into my houſe, call you my niece, and give you ſuitable breeding?

Dol. True, Madam.

Mrs Mech. And what return did you make me? You was ſcarce got into your teens, you forward ſlut, but you brought me a child almoſt as big as yourſelf; and a delightful father you choſe for it! Doctor Catgut, the meagre muſician; that ſick monkey-face maker of crotchets; that eternal trotter after all the little draggle-tail'd girls of the town. Oh, you low ſlut, had it been by a gentleman, it would not have vex'd me; but a fiddler!

Dol. For heaven's ſake——

Mrs Mech. After that you elop'd, commenc'd ſtroller, and in a couple of years return'd to town in your original trim with ſcarce a rag to your back.

Dol. Pray, Ma'am——

Mrs Mech. Did not I, notwithſtanding, receive you again? have not I tortured my brains for your good? found you a huſband as rich as a Jew, juſt brought all my matters to bear, and now you refuſe to ſign a paltry paper?

Dol. Pray, Madam, give it me, I will ſign, execute, do all that you bid me.

Mrs Mech. You will; yes, ſo you had beſt. And what's become of the child, have you done as I order'd?

Dol. The Doctor was not at home; but the nurſe left the child in the kitchen.

Mrs Mech. You heard nothing from him?

Dol. Not a word.

Mrs Mech. Then he is meditating ſome miſchief, I warrant. However, let our good ſtars ſecure us to-day, and a fig for what may happen to-morrow. It is a little unlucky, tho', that Mr Fungus has choſen the Doctor for his maſter of muſic; but as yet he has not been here, and, if poſſible, we muſt prevent him.

Enter JENNY, *haſtily.*

Jen. Mr Fungus the tallow-chandler, Ma'am, is croſſing the way; ſhall I ſay you are at home?

Mrs Mech. His brother has ſervants enough, let ſome of them anſwer. Hide, Dolly. [*Exit* Dolly *and* Jenny.] ——[*One knocks at the door.*] Ay, that's the true tap of the trader: this old brother of ours, tho', is ſmoky and ſhrewd, and, tho' an odd, a ſenſible fellow; we muſt guard againſt him: if he gets but an inkling, but the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion, our project is marr'd ——[*A noiſe without.*] What the deuce is the matter? As I live, a ſquabble between him and La Fleur, the French footman we hir'd this morning. This may make mirth, I'll liſten a little. [*Retires.*

Enter Mr Iſaac Fungus, *driving in* La Fleur.

I. Fun. What, is there nobody in the houſe that can give me an anſwer? where's my brother, you raſcal?

La Fleur. Je n'entend pas.

I. Fun. Pas! what the devil is that? Anſwer yes or no, is my brother at home? don't ſhrug up your ſhoulders at me, you——Oh, here comes a rational being.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Madam Mechlin, how fares it? this here lanthorn-jaw'd raſcal won't give me an anſwer, and indeed wou'd ſcarce let me into the houſe.

La Fleur. C'eſt gros bourgois a fait une tapage de diable.

Mrs Mech. Fy donc c'eſt le frere de Monſieur.

La Fleur. Le frere! Mon Dieu!

I. Fun. What is all this? what the devil lingo is the fellow a-talking?

Mrs Mech. This is a footman from France that your brother has taken.

I. Fun. From France! and is that the beſt of his breeding? I thought we had taught them better manners abroad, than to come here and inſult us at home. People make ſuch a rout about ſmuggling their Frenchified goods; their men do us more miſchief. If we could but hinder the importing of them——

Mrs Mech. Ay, you are a true Briton, I ſee that, Mr Iſaac.

I. Fun. I warrant me: is brother Zachary at home?

Mrs

Mrs Mech. Above ſtairs, Sir.

I. Fun. Any company with him?

Mrs Mech. Not any to hinder your viſit. La Fleur, *ouvrez le porte.*

I. Fun. Get along you——Mrs Mechlin, your ſervant. [*Exit* Mrs Mechlin.] I can't think what the devil makes your quality ſo fond of the Monſieurs; for my part, I do'nt ſee——March and be hang'd to you—you ſooty-fac'd—— [*Exit* I. Fungus, *and* La Fleur *.

'*Mrs Mech.* Come, Dolly, you now may appea

'*Enter* Jenny.

'*Jen.* Mr Paduaſoy, Ma'am, the Spitalfields weaver; 'he has been waiting this hour, and ſays he has ſome 'people at home——

'*Mrs Mech.* Let him enter; in a couple of minutes 'I'll follow you, Dolly. [*Exit* Jenny.

'*Enter* Paduaſoy.

'*Mrs Mech.* Mr Paduaſoy, you may load yourſelf 'home with thoſe ſilks, they won't do for my market.

'*Pad.* Why, what's the matter, Madam?

'*Mrs Mech.* Matter! you are a pretty fellow indeed! 'you are a tradeſman! 'tis lucky I know you, things 'might have been worſe; let us ſettle accounts, Mr Pa-'duaſoy; you'll ſee no more of my money.

'*Pad.* I ſhall be ſorry for that, Mrs Mechlin.

'*Mrs Mech.* Sorry! anſwer me one queſtion; am not 'I the beſt cuſtomer that ever you had?

'*Pad.* I confeſs it.

'*Mrs Mech.* Have not I mortgaged my precious ſoul, 'by ſwearing to my quality-cuſtomers that the ſtuff from 'your looms was the produce of Lyons?

'*Pad.* Granted.

'*Mrs Mech.* And unleſs that had been believ'd, could 'you have ſold them a yard, nay, a nail?

'*Pad.* I believe, not.

'*Mrs Mech.* Very well. Did not, Sir, I procure you 'more money for your curs'd goods, when ſold as the 'manufacture of France, than as mere Engliſh they could 'have ever produced you?

'*Pad.* I never deny'd it.

* Firſt act ends here, when done as an after-piece.

'*Mrs Mech.* Then are not you a pretty fellow, to 'blow up and ruin my reputation at once?

'*Pad.* Me, Madam!

'*Mrs Mech.* Yes, you.

'*Pad.* As how?

'*Mrs Mech.* Did not you tell me theſe pieces of ſilk 'were entire, and the only ones you had made of that 'pattern?

'*Pad.* I did.

'*Mrs Mech.* Now mind. Laſt Monday I left them 'as juſt landed, upon a pretence to ſecure them from 'ſeizure, at the old counteſs of Furbelow's, by whoſe 'means I was ſure, at my own price, to get rid of them 'both; and who ſhould come in laſt night at the ball at 'the Manſion-houſe, where my lady unluckily happen'd 'to be, with a full ſuit of the blue pattern upon her 'back, but Mrs Deputy Dowlaſs, dizen'd out like a du-'cheſs.

'*Pad.* Mrs Deputy Dowlaſs! Is it poſſible?

'*Mrs Mech.* There is no denying the fact; but that 'was not all. If, indeed, Mrs Deputy had behaved like 'a gentlewoman, and ſwore they had been ſent her from 'Paris, why there the thing would have died: but ſee 'what it is to have to do with mechanics; the fool owned 'ſhe had them from you. I ſhould be glad to ſee any 'of my cuſtomers at a loſs for a lie; but thoſe trum-'pery traders, Mr Paduaſoy, you'll never gain any cre-'dit by them.

'*Pad.* This muſt be a trick of my wife's; I know 'the women are intimate; but this piece of intelligence 'will make a hot houſe. None of my fault indeed, 'Mrs Mechlin; I hope, Ma'am, this won't make any 'difference?

'*Mrs Mech.* Difference! I don't believe I ſhall be 'able to ſmuggle a gown for you theſe ſix months. 'What is in that bundle?

'*Pad.* Some India handkerchiefs, that you promis'd 'to procure of a ſupercago at Woolwich for Sir Thomas 'Calico's lady.

'*Mrs Mech.* Are you pretty forward with the light 'ſprigg'd waiſtcoats from Italy?

'*Pad.* They will be out of the loom in a week.

Mrs

'*Mrs Mech.* You need not put any Genoa velvets in 'hand till the end of autumn; but you may make me 'immediately a freſh ſortment of foreign ribbons for 'ſummer.

'*Pad.* Any other commands, Mrs Mechlin?

'*Mrs Mech.* Not at preſent, I think.

'*Pad.* I wiſh you, Madam, a very good morning.

'*Mrs Mech.* Mr Paduaſoy! Lord, I had lik'd to have 'forgot. You muſt write an anonymous letter to the 'cuſtom-houſe, and ſend me ſome old ſilks to be ſeized; 'I muſt treat the town with a bonfire: it will make a 'fine paragraph for the papers, and at the ſame time ad-'vertiſe the public where ſuch things may be had.

'*Pad.* I ſhan't fail, Madam. [*Exit* Paduaſoy.

'*Mrs Mech.* Who ſays now that I am not a friend to 'my country? I think the Society for the Encourage-'ment of Arts ſhould vote me a premium. I am ſure I 'am one of the greateſt encouragers of our own manu-'factures. [*Exit* Mrs Mechlin.'

ACT II.

Enter ZACHARY FUNGUS, ISAAC FUNGUS, *and* MRS MECHLIN.

ZAC. FUNGUS.

BROTHER Iſaac, you are a blockhead, I tell you. But firſt anſwer me this: Can knowledge do a man any harm?

I. Fun. No, farting; what is befitting a man for to learn.

Z. Fun. To learn! and how ſhould you know what is befitting a gentleman to learn? Stick to your trade, maſter tallow-chandler.

I. Fun. Now, brother Zachary, can you ſay in your conſcience, as how it is decent to be learning to dance, when you ha' almoſt loſt the uſe of your legs?

Z. Fun. Loſt the uſe of my legs! to ſee but the malice of men! Do but ax Mrs Mechlin; now, Ma'am, does not Mrs Dukes ſay, that, conſidering my time, I have made a wonderful progreſs?

I. Fun. Your time, brother Zac?

Z. Fun. Ay, my time, brother Iſaac. Why, I ha'nt been

been at it paſſing a couple of months; and we have at our ſchool two aldermen and a ſerjeant at law, that were full half a year before they could get out of hand.

Mrs Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. There now, Mrs Mechlin can vouch it. And pray, Ma'am, does not maſter allow, that, of my age, I am the moſt hopeful ſcholar he has?

Mrs Mech. I can't but ſay, Mr Iſaac, that the 'ſquire has made a moſt prodigious improvement.

Z. Fun. Do you hear that? I wiſh we had but a kit, I would ſhow you what I could do: one, two, three, ha. One, two, three, ha. There are riſings and ſinkings!

Mrs Mech. Ay, marry, as light as a cork.

Z. Fun. A'n't it! Why, before next winter is over, he ſays he'll fit me for dancing in public; and who knows but in Lent you may ſee me amble at a ridotto with an opera-ſinger

Mrs Mech. And I warrant he acquits himſelf as well as the beſt.

I. Fun. Mercy on me! and pray, brother, that thing like a ſword in your hand, what may the uſe of that implement be?

Z. Fun. This? oh, this is a foil.

I. Fun. A foil?

Z. Fun. Ay, a little inſtrument, by which we who are gentlemen are inſtructed to kill one another.

I. Fun. To kill! Marry, heaven forbid; I hope you have no ſuch bloody intentions. Why, brother Zac, you was uſed to be a peaceable man.

Z. Fun. Ay, that was when I was a paltry mechanic, and afraid of the law: but now I am another-gueſs perſon; I have been in camps, cantoons, and intrenchments; I have marched over bridges and breaches; I have ſeen the Ezel and Wezell; I'm got as rich as a Jew; and if any man dares to affront me, I'll let him know that my trade has been fighting.

I. Fun. Rich as a Jew! Ah, Zac, Zac! but if you had not had another-gueſs trade than fighting, I doubt whether you would have returned altogether ſo rich: but now you have got all this wealth, why not ſit down and enjoy it in quiet?

Z.

Z. Fun. Hark ye, Isaac, do you purtend to know life? are you acquainted with the beaux d'esprits of the age?

I. Fun. I don't understand you.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; then how should you know what belongs to gentility?

I. Fun. And why not as well as you, brother Zac? I hope I am every whit as well born.

Z. Fun. Ay, Isaac, but the breeding is all: consider I have been a gentleman above five years and three quarters, and I think should know a little what belongs to the business; hey, Mrs Mechlin?

Mrs Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. And as to this foil, do you know, Isaac, in what the art of fencing consists?

I. Fun. How should I?

Z. Fun. Why, it is short; there are but two rules: the first is, to give your antagonist as many thrusts as you can; the second, to be careful and receive none yourself.

I. Fun. But how is this to be done?

Z. Fun. Oh, easy enough: for, do you see, if you can but divert your adversary's point from the line of your body, it is impossible he ever should hit you; and all this is done by a little turn of the wrist, either this way, or that way. But I'll show you: John, bring me a foil. Mrs Mechlin, it will be worth your observing. Here, brother Isaac—— [*Offers him a foil.*

I. Fun. Not I.

Z. Fun. These bourgois are so frightful. Mrs Mechlin, will you, Ma'am, do me the favour to push at me a little? Mind, brother, when she thrusts at me in carte, I do so; and when she pushes in tierce, I do so; and by this means a man is sure to avoid being killed. But it may not be amiss, brother Isaac, to give you the progress of a regular quarrel; and then you will see what sort of a thing a gentleman is. Now I have been told, d'ye see, brother Isaac, by a friend who has a regard for my honour, that Captain Jenkins, or Hopkins, or Wilkins, or what captain you please, has in public company call'd me a cuckold——

I.

I. Fun. A cuckold? But how can that be? becauſe why, brother Zac, you ben't married.

Z. Fun. But as I am juſt going to be marry'd, that may very well happen, you know.

Mrs Mech. True.

Z. Fun. Yes, yes, the thing is natural enough. Well, the captain has ſaid, I am a cuckold. Upon which, the firſt time I ſet eyes on Captain Wilkins, either at Vauxhall or at Ranelagh, I accoſt him in a courteous, genteel-like manner.

I. Fun. And that's more than he merits.

Z. Fun. Your patience, dear Iſaac—— in a courteous, gentleman-like manner; Captain Hopkins, your ſervant.

I. Fun. Why, you call'd him but now Captain Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Pſha! you blockhead, I tell you the name does not ſignify nothing——Your ſervant; ſhall I crave your ear for a moment? The Captain politely replies, Your commands, good Mr Fungus? Then we walk ſide by ſide—come here, Mrs Mechlin.—[*They walk up and down*] for ſome time as civil as can be. Mind, brother Iſaac.

I. Fun. I do, I do.

Z. Fun. Hey!——no, t'other ſide, Mrs Mechlin—— that's right——I hear, Captain Wilkins.

I. Fun. I knew it was Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Zounds! Iſaac, be quiet—Wilkins, that you have taken ſome liberties about and concerning of me, which, damme, I don't underſtand—

I. Fun. Don't ſwear, brother Zachary.

Z. Fun. Did ever mortal hear the like of this fellow?

I. Fun. But you are grown ſuch a reprobate ſince you went to the wars—

Z. Fun. Mrs Mechlin, ſtop the tongue of that blockhead; why, dunce, I am ſpeaking by rule, and Mrs Mechlin can tell you that duels and damme's go always together.

Mrs Mech. Oh, always.

Z. Fun. Which, damme, I don't underſtand. Liberties with you, cries the Captain; where, when, and in what manner? Laſt Friday night, in company at the St Alban's,

Alban's, you call'd me a buck; and moreover said, that my horns were exalted. Now, Sir, I know very well what was your meaning by that, and therefore demand satisfaction. That, Sir, is what I never deny to a gentleman; but as to you, Mr Fungus, I can't consent to give you that rank. How, Sir! do you deny my gentility? Oh, that affront must be answered this instant—Draw, Sir. Now push, Mrs Mechlin. [*They fence.*] There I parry tierce, there I parry carte, there I parry ——Hold, hold, have a care, zooks! Mrs Mechlin.

I. Fun. Ha, ha, ha! I think you have met with your match; well push'd, Mrs Mechlin.

Z. Fun. Ay, but instead of pushing in tierce, she push-ed me in carte, and came so thick with her thrusts, that it was not in nature to parry them.

I. Fun. Well, well, I am fully convinc'd of your skill; but I think, brother Zac, you hinted an intention of marrying; is that your design?

Z. Fun. Undoubtedly.

I. Fun. And when?

Z. Fun. Why, this evening.

I. Fun. So sudden! and pray, is it a secret; to whom?

Z. Fun. A secret, no; I am proud of the match; she brings me all that I want, her veins full of good blood; such a family! such an alliance! zooks, she has a pedi-gree as long as the Mall, brother Isaac, with large trees on each side, and all the boughs loaded with lords.

I. Fun. But has the lady no name?

Z. Fun. Name! ay, such a name, Lord, we have nothing like it in London: none of your stunded little dwarfish words of one syllable; your Watts, and your Potts, and your Trotts; this rumbles through the throat like a cart with broad wheels. Mrs Mechlin, you can pronounce it better than me.

Mrs Mech. Lady Sachariffa Mackirkincroft.

Z. Fun. Kirkincroft! there are a mouthful of syllables for you. Lineally defcended from Hercules Alexander Charlemagne Hannibal, earl of Glendower, prime minister to king Malcolm the first.

I. Fun. And are all the parties agreed?

Z. Fun. I can't say quite all; for the right honourable peer that is to be my papa, (who by the bye is as proud

proud as the devil) has flatly renounc'd the alliance; calls me here in his letter Plebeian; and says, if we have any children, they will turn out very little better than pye-balls.

I. Fun. And what does the gentlewoman say?

Z. Fun. The gentlewoman! Oh, the gentlewoman, who (between ourselves) is pretty near as high as her father; but, however, my person has prov'd too hard for her pride, and I take the affair to be as good as concluded.

I. Fun. It is resolv'd?

Z. Fun. Fix'd.

I. Fun. I am sorry for it.

Z. Fun. Why so? come, come, brother Isaac, don't be uneasy, I have a shrewd guess at your grievance; but though you may not be suffer'd to see lady Scracariffa at first, yet who knows before long I may have interest enough with her to bring it about; and in the mean time you may dine when you will with the steward.

I. Fun. You are exceedingly kind.

Z. Fun. Mrs Mechlin, you don't think my lady will gainsay it?

Mrs Mech. By no means; it is wonderful, considering her rank, how mild and condescending she is: why, but yesterday, says her ladyship to me, Though, Mrs Mechlin, it can't be suppos'd that I shou'd admit any of the Fungus family into my presence——

Z. Fun. No, no, to be sure; not at first, as I said.

Mrs Mech. Yet his brother, or any other relation, may dine with the servants every day.

Z. Fun. Do you hear, Isaac? there's your true, inherent nobility, so humble and affable: but people of real rank never have any pride; that is only for upstarts.

I. Fun. Wonderfully gracious: but here, brother Zac, you mistake me; it is not for myself I am sorry.

Z. Fun. Whom then?

I. Fun. For you. Don't you think that your wife will despise you?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you suppose that you will live togther a month?

Z. Fun. Yes.

I. Fun. Why, can you bear to walk about your own houſe like a paltry dependent?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To have yourſelf and your orders contemn'd by your ſervants?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To ſee your property devour'd by your lady's beggarly couſins, who, notwithſtanding, won't vouchſafe you a nod?——

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you be blind at her bidding, run at her ſending, come at her calling, dine by yourſelf when ſhe has bettermoſt company, and ſleep ſix nights a-week in the garret?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Why, will you dare to diſobey, have the impudence to diſpute the ſovereign will and pleaſure of a lady like her?

Z. Fun. Ay, marry will I.

I. Fun. And don't you expect a whole clan of Andrew Ferraros, with their naked points at your throat?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Then you don't know half you will have to go through.

Z. Fun. Look you, brother, I know what you wou'd be at; you don't mean I ſhou'd marry at all.

I. Fun. Indeed, brother Zachary, you wrong me; I ſhou'd with pleaſure ſee you equally match'd, that is, to one of your own rank and condition.

Z. Fun. You wou'd? I don't doubt it; but that is a pleaſure you never will have. Look you, Iſaac, I have made up my mind; it is a lady I like, and a lady I will have; and if you ſay any more, I'll not be contented with that, for damme I'll marry a ducheſs.

Enter La Fleur.

La Fleur. Le Maître pour donner d'eloquence.

Z. Fun. What does the puppy ſay, Mrs Mechlin? for you know I can't parler vous.

Mrs Mech. The gentleman from the city, that is to make you a ſpeaker.

Z. Fun. Odzooks! a ſpecial fine fellow; let's have him.

Mrs Mech. Faites le entres. [*Exit* La Fleur.

I. Fun. Brother, as you are busy, I will take another——

Z. Fun. No, no, this is the fineſt fellow of all, it is he that is to make me a man; and hark ye, brother, if I ſhould chance to riſe in the ſtate, no more words, your buſineſs is done.

I. Fun. What, I reckon ſome member of parliament?

Z. Fun. A member! Lord help you, brother Iſaac, this man is a whole ſenate himſelf. Why, it is the famous orationer that has publiſh'd the book.

I. Fun. What, Mr Gruel.

Z. Fun. The ſame.

I. Fun. Yes, I have ſeen his name in the news.

Z Fun. His knowledge is wonderful; he has told me ſuch ſecrets: why, do you know, Iſaac, by what means 'tis we ſpeak?

I. Fun. Speak! why we ſpeak with our mouths.

Z. Fun. No, we don't.

I. Fun. No!

Z. Fun. No. He ſays we ſpeak by means of the tongue, the teeth, and the throat; and without them we only ſhould bellow.

I. Fun. But ſurely the mouth—

Z. Fun. The mouth, I tell you, is little or nothing; only juſt a cavity for the air to paſs through.

I. Fun. Indeed!

Z. Fun That's all; and when the cavity's ſmall, little ſounds will come out; when large, the great ones proceed; obſerve now in whiſtling and bawling—[*Whiſtles and bawls.*]——Do you ſee? Oh, he is a miraculous man!

I. Fun. But of what uſe is all this?

Z Fun. But 'tis knowledge, an't it; and of what ſignification is that, you fool! And then as to uſe, why he can make me ſpeak in any manner he pleaſes; as a lawyer, a merchant, a country gentleman; whatever the ſubject requires—But here he is.

Enter Mr Gruel.

Mr Gruel, your ſervant; I have been holding forth in your praiſe.

Gruel. I make no doubt, Mr Fungus; but to your decla-

declamation, or recitation (as Quintilian more properly terms it), I ſhall be indebted for much future praiſe, in as much as the reputation of the ſcholar does (as I may ſay) confer, or rather as it were reflect, a marvellous kind of luſtre on the fame of the maſter himſelf.

Z. Fun. There, Iſaac! didſt ever hear the like? he talks juſt as if it were all out of a book; what wou'd you give to be able to utter ſuch words?

I. Fun. And what ſhou'd I do with them? them holiday-terms wou'd not paſs in my ſhop; there's no buying and ſelling with them.

Gruel. Your obſervation is pithy and pertinent. Different ſtations different idioms demand; poliſhed periods accord ill with the mouths of mechanics; but as that tribe is permitted to circulate a baſer kind of coin, for the eaſe and convenience of inferior traffic, ſo it is indulg'd with a vernacular or vitious vulgar phraſeology, to carry on their interlocutory commerce. But I doubt, Sir, I ſoar above the region of your comprehenſion?

I. Fun. Why, if you wou'd come down a ſtep or two, I can't ſay but I ſhou'd underſtand you the better.

Z. Fun. And I too.

Gruel. Then to the familiar I fall: if the gentleman has any ambition to ſhine at a veſtry, a common-hall, or even a convivial club, I can ſupply him with ample materials.

I. Fun. No, I have no ſuch deſire.

Gruel. Not to loſe time; your brother here, (for ſuch I find the gentleman is), in other reſpects a common man like yourſelf——

Z. Fun. No better.

Gruel. Obſerve how alter'd by means of my art: are you prepar'd in the ſpeech on the great importance of trade?

Z. Fun. Pretty well, I believe.

Gruel. Let your geſticulations be chaſte, and your muſcular movements conſiſtent.

Z. Fun. Never fear——[*Enter* Jenny, *and whiſpers* Mrs Mechlin.]

Mrs Mechlin, you'll ſtay?

Mrs Mech. A little buſineſs, I'll return in an inſtant. [*Exit* Mrs Mechlin.

Gruel. A little here to the left, if you pleaſe, Sir, there you will only catch his profile—that's right—now you will have the full force of his face; one, two, three; now off you go.

Z. Fun. When I conſider the vaſt importance of this day's debate; when I revolve the various viciſſitudes that this ſoil has ſuſtain'd; when I ponder what our painted progenitors were, and what we their civilized ſucceſſors are; when I reflect, that they fed on crab-apples and cheſnuts——

Gruel. Pignuts, good Sir, if you pleaſe.

Z. Fun. You are right; crab-apples and pig-nuts; and that we feaſt on green-peaſe, and on cuſtards: when I trace in the recording hiſtorical page, that their floods gave them nothing but frogs, and now know we have fiſh by land-carriage, I am loſt in amazement at the prodigious power of commerce. Hail, Commerce! daughter of induſtry, conſort to credit, parent of opulence, full ſiſter to liberty, and great-grandmother to the art of navigation——

I. Fun. Why, this gentlewoman has a pedigree as long as your wife's, brother Zac.

Z. Fun. Prithee, Iſaac, be quiet—art of navigation—a—a—vigation——Zooks, that fellow has put me quite out.

Gruel. It matters not; this day's performance has largely fulfill'd your yeſterday's promiſe.

Z. Fun. But I han't half done, the beſt is to come; let me juſt give him that part about turnpegs—for the ſloughs, the mires, the ruts, the impaſſable bogs, that the languid but generous ſteed travelled through; he now pricks up his ears, he neighs, he canters, he capers through a whole region of turnpegs.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Your riding-maſter is below.

Z. Fun. Gadſo! then here we muſt end. You'll pardon me, good Mr Gruel; for as I want to be a finiſhed gentleman as ſoon as I can, it is impoſſible for me to ſtick long to any one thing.

Gruel. Sir, though your exit is rather abrupt, yet the mul-

multiplicity of your avocations do (as I may ſay) in ſome meaſure cicatrize the otherwiſe mortal wound on this occaſion ſuſtained by decorum.

Z. Fun. Cicatriſe! I could hear him all day. He is a wonderful man. Well, Mr Gruel, to-morrow we will at it again.

Gruel. You will find me prompt at your ſlighteſt volition.

Z. Fun. I wiſh, brother Iſaac, I could have ſtaid; you ſhould have heard me oration away, like a lawyer, about pleadings and preſidents; but all in good time.—

[*Exit* Fungus.

Mrs Mech. This gentleman, Sir, will gain you vaſt credit.

Gruel. Yes, Ma'am, the capabilities of the gentleman, I confeſs, are enormous; and, as to you I am indebted for this promiſing pupil, you will permit me to expunge the obligation by an inſtantaneous and gratis lecture on that ſpecies of eloquence peculiar to ladies.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Sir, I have no ſort of occaſion—

Gruel. As to that biped, man, (for ſuch I define him to be), a male or maſculine manner belongs—

Mrs Mech. Any other time, good Mr Gruel.

Gruel. So to that biped woman, ſhe participating of his general nature, the word *homo* in Latin being promiſcuouſly uſed as woman or man—

Mrs Mech. For heaven's ſake—

Gruel. But being caſt in a more tender and delicate mold—

Mrs Mech. Sir, I have twenty people in waiting—

Gruel. The ſoft, ſupple, inſinuating graces—

Mrs Mech. I muſt inſiſt——

Gruel. Do appertain (as I may ſay) in a more peculiar or more particular manner——

Mrs Mech. Nay, then——

Gruel. Her rank in the order of entities—

Mrs Mech. I muſt thruſt you out of my houſe.

Gruel. Not calling her forth——

Mrs Mech. Was there ever ſuch a—[*puſhing him out.*

Re-enter Gruel.

Gruel. To thoſe eminent, hazardous, and (as I may ſay) perilous conflicts, which ſo often—

Mrs Mech. Get down ſtairs, and be hang'd to you. [*Puſhes him out.*] There he goes, as I live, from the top to the bottom; I hope I han't done him a miſchief: You ar'n't hurt, Mr Gruel?—No, all's ſafe; I hear him going on with his ſpeech; an impertinent puppy!

I. Fun. Impertinent, indeed; I wonder all thoſe people don't turn your head, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Oh, I am pretty well us'd to 'em. But who comes here? Mr Iſaac, if you will ſtep into the next room, I have ſomething to communicate that well deſerves your attention. [*Exit* Iſaac Fungus.

Enter Simon.

Sim. Doctor Catgut at the foot of the ſtairs.

Mrs Mech. The devil he is! What can have brought him at this time of day? Watch, Simon, that nobody comes up whilſt he is here. [*Exit* Simon.] I hope he has not heard of the pretty preſent we ſent him to-day.

Enter Dr Catgut.

Dr Cat. Madam Mechlin, your humble. I have, Ma'am, received a couple of compliments from your manſion this morning; one I find from a lodger of your's; the other, I preſume, from your niece; but for the laſt, I rather ſuppoſe I am indebted to you.

Mrs Mech. Me! Indeed, Doctor, you are widely miſtaken; I aſſure you, Sir, ſince your buſineſs broke out, I have never ſet eyes of her once.

Dr Cat. Then I am falſely informed.

Mrs Mech. But after all, you muſt own it is but what you deſerve; I wonder, Doctor, you don't leave off theſe tricks.

Dr Cat. Why, what can I do, Mrs Mechlin? my conſtitution requires it.

Mrs Mech. Indeed! I ſhould not have thought it.

Dr Cat. Then the dear little devils are ſo deſperately fond.

Mrs Mech. Without doubt.

Dr Cat. And for frolic, flirtation, diligence, dreſs, and addreſs——

Mrs Mech. To be ſure.

Dr Cat. For what you call genuine gallantry, few men, I flatter myſelf, will be found that can match me.

Mrs Mech. Oh, that's a point given up.

Dr Cat. Hark ye, Molly Mechlin; let me periſh, child, you look divinely to-day.

Mrs Mech. Indeed!

Dr Cat. But that I have two or three affairs on my hands, I ſhould be poſitively tempted to trifle with thee a little.

Mrs Mech. Ay, but, Doctor, conſider I am not of a trifling age, it would be only loſing your time.

Dr Cat. Ha, ſo coy! But a-propos, Molly, this lodger of your's; who is he, and what does he want?

Mrs Mech. You have heard of the great Mr Fungus?

Dr Cat. Well!

Mrs Mech. Being informed of your ſkill and abilities, he has ſent for you to teach him to ſing.

Dr Cat. Me teach him to ſing! What, does the ſcoundrel mean to affront me?

Mrs Mech. Affront you!

Dr Cat. Why, don't you know, child, that I quitted that paltry profeſſion?

Mrs Mech. Not I.

Dr Cat. Oh, entirely renounc'd it.

Mrs Mech. Then what may you follow at preſent?

Dr Cat. Me!—nothing; I am a poet, my dear.

Mrs Mech. A poet!

Dr Cat. A poet. The muſes; you know I was always fond of the ladies: I ſuppoſe you have heard of Shakeſpeare, and Shadwell, of Tom Brown, and of Milton and Hudibras?

Mrs Mech. I have.

Dr Cat. I ſhall blaſt all their laurels, by gad; I have juſt given the public a taſte, but there's a belly-full for them in my larder at home.

Mrs Mech. Upon my word, you ſurpriſe me; but pray, is poetry a trade to be learn'd?

Dr Cat. Doubtleſs. Capital as I am, I have not acquired it above a couple of years.

Mrs Mech. And cou'd you communicate your art to another?

Dr Cat. To be ſure. Why I have here in my pocket, my dear, a whole folio of rhimes, from Z quite to great A. Let us ſee; A, ay, here it begins, A, aſs, paſs, graſs, maſs, laſs; and ſo quite thro' the alphabet

down

down to Z. Zounds, grounds, mounds, pounds, hounds.

Mrs Mech. And what do you do with thoſe rhimes?

Dr Cat. Oh, we ſupply them.

Mrs Mech. Supply them?

Dr Cat. Ay, fill them up, as I will ſhow you. Laſt week, in a ramble to Dulwich, I made theſe rhimes into a duet for a new comic opera I have on the ſtocks. Mind, for I look upon the words as a model for that ſort of writing.—Firſt, *ſhe:*

There to ſee the ſluggiſh aſs,
Through the meadows as we paſs,
Eating up the farmer's graſs,
Blyth and merry, by the maſs,
As a lively country laſs.

Mrs Mech. Very pretty.

Dr Cat. A'n't it? Then *he* replies:

Hear the farmer cry out, Zounds!
As he trudges through the grounds,
Yonder beaſt has broke my mounds;
If the pariſh has no pounds,
Kill, and give him to the hounds.

Then Da Capo, both join in repeating the laſt ſtanza; and this, tack'd to a tolerable tune, will run you for a couple of months. You obſerve?

Mrs Mech. Clearly. As our gentleman is deſirous to learn all kinds of things, I can't help thinking but he will take a fancy to this.

Dr Cat. In that caſe, he may command me, my dear; and I promiſe you, in a couple of months, he ſhall know as much of the matter as I do.

Mrs Mech. At preſent he is a little engaged; but as ſoon as the honey-moon is over——

Dr Cat. Honey-moon! Why, is he going to be marry'd?

Mrs Mech. This evening, I fancy.

Dr Cat. The fineſt opportunity in nature for an introduction: I have by me, Ma'am Mechlin, of my own compoſition, ſuch an epithalmium.

Mrs Mech. Thalmium, what's that?

Dr Cat. A kind of an elegy, that we poets compoſe at the ſolemnization of weddings.

Mrs Mech. Oh, ho!

Dr Cat. It is ſet to muſic already, for I ſtill compoſe for myſelf.

Mrs Mech. You do?

Dr Cat. What think you now of providing a band, and ſerenading the 'Squire to-night! It will be a pretty extempore compliment.

Mrs Mech. The prettieſt thought in the world. But I hear Mr Fungus's bell. You'll excuſe me, dear Doctor, you may ſuppoſe we are buſy.

Dr Cat. No apology then, I'll about it this inſtant.

Mrs Mech. As ſoon as you pleaſe.—Any thing to get you out of the way. [*Aſide, and exit.*

Dr Cat. Your obſequious, good Madam Mechlin. But, notwithſtanding all your fine ſpeeches, I ſhrewdly ſuſpect my bleſſed bargain at home was a preſent from you; and what ſhall I do with it?——Theſe little embarraſſes we men of intrigue are eternally ſubject to. There will be no ſending it back; ſhe will never let it enter the houſe.—Hey! gad, a lucky thought is come into my head——this ſerenade is finely contrived——Madam Mechlin ſhall have her couſin again, for I will return her bye-blow in the body of a double baſe-viol; ſo the bawd ſhall have a concert as well as the 'Squire.—

[*Exit Dr* Catgut.

ACT III.

Enter HARPY, YOUNG LOVEIT, *and* JENNY.

HARPY.

TELL your miſtreſs my name is *Harpy*; ſhe knows me, and how precious my time is.

Jen. Mr Harpy, the attorney of Furnival's Inn?

Har. The ſame. [*Exit* Jenny.] 'Ay, ay, young 'gentleman, this is your woman; I warrant your buſi-'neſs is done. You knew Kitty Williams, that marry'd 'Mr Abednigo Potiphar the Jew broker?

'*Y. Lov.* I did.

'*Har.* And Robin Rainbow, the happy huſband of the widow Champanſy, from the iſle of St Kitts?

'*Y. Lov.* I have ſeen him.

'*Har.* All owing to her. Her ſucceſs in that branch

'of

'of buſineſs is wonderful! Why, I dare believe, ſince 'laſt ſummer, ſhe has not ſent off leſs than forty couple 'to Edinburgh.

'*Y. Lov.* Indeed! She muſt be very adroit.

'*Har.* Adroit! You ſhall judge. I will tell you a 'caſe: you know the large brick-houſe at Peckham, 'with a turret at top?

'*Y. Lov.* Well.

'*Har.* There liv'd Miſs Cicely Mite, the only daugh-'ter of old Mite the cheeſemonger, at the corner of 'Newgate-ſtreet, juſt turn'd of fourteen, and under the 'wing of an old maiden aunt as watchful as a dragon '—but huſh—I hear Mrs Mechlin, I'll take another 'ſeaſon to finiſh my tale.'

Y. Lov. But, Mr Harpy, as theſe kind of women are a good deal given to goſſiping, I wou'd rather my real name was a ſecret till there is a ſort of neceſſity.

Har. Goſſiping! She, Lord help you, ſhe is as cloſe as a Catholic confeſſor.

Y. Lov. That may be; but you muſt give me leave to inſiſt.

Har. Well, well, as you pleaſe.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Your very humble ſervant, good Madam Mechlin; I have taken the liberty to introduce a young gentleman, a friend of mine, to crave your aſſiſtance.

Mrs Mech. Any friend of yours, Mr Harpy; won't you be ſeated, Sir?

Y. Lov. Ma'am? [*They ſit down.*

Mrs Mech. And pray, Sir, how can I ſerve you?

Har. Why, Ma'am, the gentleman's ſituation is—— but, Sir, you had better ſtate your caſe to Mrs Mechlin yourſelf.

Y. Lov. Why, you are to know, Ma'am, that I am juſt eſcap'd from the univerſity, where (I need not tell you) you are greatly eſteem'd.

Mrs Mech. Very obliging! I muſt own, Sir, I have had a very great reſpect for that learned body ever ſince they made a near and dear friend of mine a doctor of muſic.

Y. Lov. Yes, Ma'am, I remember the gentleman.

Mrs

Mrs Mech. Do you know him, Sir? I expect him here every minute to inſtruct a lodger of mine.

Y. Lov. Not intimately. Juſt arriv'd, but laſt night; upon my coming to town, I found my father deceas'd, and all his fortune devis'd to his relict my mother.

Mrs Mech. What, the whole!

Y. Lov. Every ſhilling. That is, for her life.

Mrs Mech. And to what ſum may it amount?

Y. Lov. My mother is eternally telling me, that after her I ſhall inherit fifty or ſixty thouſand at leaſt.

Mrs Mech. Upon my word, a capital ſum.

Y. Lov. But of what uſe, my dear Mrs Mechlin, ſince ſhe refuſes to advance me a guinea upon the credit of it; and while the graſs grows——You know the proverb——

Mrs Mech. What, I ſuppoſe, you want ſomething for preſent ſubſiſtence?

Y. Lov. Juſt my ſituation.

Mrs Mech. Have you thought of nothing for yourſelf?

Y. Lov. I am reſolved to be guided by you.

Mrs Mech. What do you think of a wife?

Y. Lov. A wife!

Mrs Mech. Come, come, don't deſpiſe my advice: when a young man's finances are low, a wife is a much better reſource than a uſurer; and there are in this town a number of kind-hearted widows, that take a pleaſure in repairing the injuries done by fortune to handſome young fellows.

Har. Mrs Mechlin has reaſon.

Y. Lov. But, dear Ma'am, what can I do with a wife?

Mrs Mech. Do! Why, like other young fellows who marry ladies a little ſtricken in years; make her your banker and ſteward. If you ſay but the word, before night, I'll give you a widow with two thouſand a year in her pocket.

Y. Lov. Two thouſand a-year! a pretty employment, if the reſidence cou'd but be diſpens'd with.

Mrs Mech What do you mean by reſidence? Do you think a gentleman, like a pitiful trader, is to be eternally tack'd to his wife's petticoat: when ſhe is in

town,

town, be you in the country; as ſhe ſhifts do you ſhift. Why, you need not be with her above thirty days in the year; and, let me tell you, you won't find a more eaſy condition; twelve months ſubſiſtence for one month's labour!

Y. Lov. Two thouſand a-year, you are ſure?

Mrs Mech. The leaſt penny.

Y. Lov. Well, Madam, you ſhall diſpoſe of me juſt as you pleaſe.

Mrs Mech. Very well; if you will call in half an hour at fartheſt, I believe we ſhall finiſh the buſineſs.

Y. Lov. In half an hour?

Mrs Mech. Preciſely. Oh, diſpatch is the very life and ſoul of my trade. Mr Harpy will tell you my terms; you will find them reaſonable enough.

Har. Oh, I am ſure we ſhall have no diſpute about thoſe.

Y. Lov. No, no.——[*Going.*]

Mrs Mech. Oh, but Mr Harpy, it may be proper to mention that the gentlewoman, the party, is upwards of ſixty.

Y. Lov. With all my heart; it is the purſe, not the perſon, I want! Sixty! ſhe is quite a girl; I wiſh with all my ſoul ſhe was ninety.

Mrs Mech. Get you gone, you are a devil, I ſee that.

Y. Lov. Well, for half an hour, ſweet Mrs Mechlin, adieu. [*Exeunt* Young Loveit *and* Harpy.

Mrs Mech. Soh! I have provided for my dowager from Devonſhire-ſquare; and now to cater for my commiſſary. Here he comes.

Enter Fungus *and* Bridoun.

Fun. So, in ſix weeks——Oh, Mrs Mechlin, any news from the lady?

Mrs Mech. I expect her here every moment. She is conſcious that in this ſtep ſhe deſcends from her dignity; but being deſirous to ſcreen you from the fury of her noble relations, ſhe is determined to let them ſee that the act and deed is entirely her own.

Fung. Very kind, very obliging, indeed! But, Mrs Mechlin, as the family is ſo furious, I reckon we ſhall never be reconcil'd

Mrs Mech. I don't know that. When you have bought

bought commiſſions for her three younger brothers, diſcharged the mortgage on the paternal eſtate, and portioned off eight or nine of her ſiſters, it is not impoſſible but my lord may be prevailed on to ſuffer your name——

Fun. Do you think ſo?

Mrs Mech. But then a work of time, Mr Fungus.

Fun. Ay, ay; I know very well, things of that kind are not brought about in a hurry.

Mrs Mech. But I muſt prepare matters for the lady's reception.

Fun. By all means. The jewels are ſent to her ladyſhip?

Mrs Mech. To be ſure.

Fun. And the ring for her ladyſhip, and her ladyſhip's licence?

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, and her ladyſhip's parſon too; all are prepar'd.

Fun. Parſon! why, won't her ladyſhip pleaſe to be marry'd at Powl's?

Mrs Mech. Lord, Mr Fungus, do you think a lady of her rank and condition would bear to be ſeen in public at once with a perſon like you?

Fun. That's true, I——

Mrs Mech. No, no; I have ſent to Dr Tickletext, and the buſineſs will be done in the parlour below.

Fun. As you and her ladyſhip pleaſes, good Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. You will get dreſs'd as ſoon as you can.

Fun. I ſhall only take a ſhort leſſon from Mr Bridoun, and then wait her ladyſhip's pleaſure. Mrs Mechlin, may my brother be by?

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, provided his being ſo is kept a ſecret from her.

Fun. Never fear. [*Exit Mrs* Mechlin.]——Well, Mr Bridoun, and you think I am mended a little?——

Brid. A great deal.

Fun. And that in a month or ſix weeks I may be able to prance upon a long-tail'd horſe in Hyde-park, without any danger of falling?

Brid. Without doubt.

Fun. It will be vaſt pleaſant, in the heat of the day, to canter along the King's-road, ſide by ſide with the la-

dies, in the thick of the duſt; but that I muſt not hope for this ſummer.

Brid. I don't know that, if you follow it cloſe.

Fun. Never fear, I ſhan't be ſparing of—But come, come, let us get to our buſineſs——John, have the carpenters brought home my new horſe? [*Enter* John.

John. It is here, Sir, upon the top of the ſtairs.

Fun. Then fetch it in, in an inſtant. [*Exit* John.] What a deal of time and trouble there goes, Mr Bridoun, to the making a gentleman. And do your gentlemen-born now (for I reckon you have had of all ſorts) take as much pains as we do?

Brid. To be ſure; but they begin at an earlier age.

Fun. There is ſomething in that; I did not know but they might be apter, more cuterer now in catching their larning.

Brid. Diſpoſitions do certainly differ.

Fun. Ay, ay, ſomething in nater, I warrant; as they ſay the children of blackamoors will ſwim as ſoon as they come into the world.

[*Enter ſervants with a wooden horſe.*

Oh, here he is. Ods me! it is a ſtately fine beaſt.

Brid. Here, my lads, place it here——very well. Where's your ſwitch, Mr Fungus?

Fun. I have it.

Brid. Now let me ſee you vault nimbly into your ſeat. Zounds! you are got on the wrong ſide, Mr Fungus?

Fun. I am ſo, indeed, but we'll ſoon rectify that. Now we are right: may I have leave to lay hold of the mane?

Brid. If you can't mount him without.

Fun. I will try; but this ſteed is ſo deviliſh tall—Mr Bridoun, you don't think he'll throw me?

Brid. Never fear.

Fun. Well, if he ſhou'd, he can't kick; that's one comfort, however.

Brid. Now mind your poſition.

Fun. Stay till I recover my wind.

Brid. Let your head be erect.

Fun. There.

Brid. And your ſhoulders fall eaſily back.

Fun. Ho——there.

Brid. Your ſwitch perpendicular in your right hand—your right——that is it: your left to the bridle.

Fun. There.

Brid. Your knees in, and your toes out.

Fun. There.

Brid. Are you ready?

Fun. When you will.

Brid. Off you go.

Fun. Don't let him gallop at firſt.

Brid. Very well: preſerve your poſition.

Fun. I warrant.

Brid. Does he carry you eaſy?

Fun. All the world like a cradle. But, Mr Bridoun, I go at a wonderful rate.

Brid. Mind your knees.

Fun. Ay, ay, I can't think but this here horſe ſtands ſtill very near as faſt as another can gallop.

Brid. Mind your toes.

Fun. Ho, ſtop the horſe: Zounds! I'm out of the ſtirrups, I can't ſit him no longer; there I go.——— [*Falls off.*

Brid. I hope you ar'n't hurt?

Fun. My left hip has a little confuſion.

Brid. A trifle, quite an accident; it might happen to the very beſt rider in England.

Fun. Indeed!

Brid. We have ſuch things happen every day at the manege; but you are vaſtly improv'd.

Fun. Why, I am grown bolder a little; and, Mr Bridoun, when do you think I may venture to ride a live horſe?

Brid. The very inſtant you are able to keep your ſeat on a dead one.——

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Bleſs me, Mr Fungus, how you are trifling your time! I expect lady Sachariſſa every moment, and ſee what a trim you are in.

Fun. I beg pardon, good Madam Mechlin. I'll be equipp'd in a couple of minutes; where will her ladyſhip pleaſe to receive me?

Mrs Mech. In this room, to be ſure; come, ſtir, ſtir.

Fung. I have had a little fall from my horſe—I'll go as faſt as I—Mr Bridoun, will you lend me a lift?

[*Exeunt* Fungus *and* Bridoun.

Mrs Mech. There——Jenny, ſhow Mrs Loveit in here——Who's there——

Enter Servants.

Pray move that piece of lumber out of the way. Come, come, make haſte. Madam, if you'll ſtep in here for a moment.

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. So, ſo, Mrs Mechlin; well, you ſee I am true to my time; and how have you throve, my good woman?

Mrs Mech. Beyond expectations.

Mrs Lov. Indeed! And have you provided a party?

Mrs Mech. Ay, and ſuch a party, you might ſearch the town round before you cou'd meet with his fellow: he'll ſuit you in every reſpect.

Mrs Lov. As how, as how, my dear woman?

Mrs Mech. A gentleman by birth and by breeding, none of your little whipper-ſnapper Jacks, but a countenance as comely, and a preſence as portly; he has one fault indeed, if you can but overlook that.

Mrs Lov. What is it?

Mrs Mech. His age.

Mrs Lov. Age! how, how?

Mrs Mech. Why, he is rather under your mark, I am afraid: not above twenty at moſt.

Mrs Lov. Well, well, ſo he anſwers in every thing elſe, we muſt overlook that; for, Mrs Mechlin, there is no expecting perfection below.

Mrs Mech. True, Ma'am.

Mrs Lov. And where is he?

Mrs Mech. I look for him every minute; if you will but ſtep into the drawing-room, I have given him ſuch a picture, that I am ſure he is full as impatient as you.

Mrs Lov. My dear woman, you are ſo kind and obliging: but, Mrs Mechlin, how do I look? don't flatter me, do you think my figure will ſtrike him?

Mrs Mech. Or he muſt be blind.

Mrs Lov. You may juſt hint black don't become me, that I am a little paler of late; the loſs of a huſband one loves will cauſe an alteration, you know.

Mrs Mech. True; oh, he will make an allowance for that.

Mrs Lov. But things will come round in a trice.

[*Exit Mrs* Loveit.

Enter Simon.

Sim. Madam, Miſs Dolly is dizen'd out, and every thing ready.

Mrs Mech. Let her wait for the commiſſary here, I will introduce him the inſtant he is dreſs'd

[*Exit Mrs* Mechlin.

Sim. Miſs Dolly, you may come in, your aunt will be here in an inſtant.

Enter Dolly *and* Jenny.

Dol. Huſh, Simon, huſh; to your poſt.

Sim. I am gone——— [*Exit* Simon.

Dol. Well, Jenny, and have I the true quality-air?

Jen. As perfectly, Ma'am, as if you had been bred to the buſineſs; and for figure, I defy the firſt of them all. For my part, I think Mr Fungus very well off; when the ſecret comes out, I don't ſee what right he has to be angry.

Dol. Oh, when once he is noos'd, let him ſtruggle as much as he will, the cord will be drawn only the tighter.

Jen. Ay, ay, we may truſt to your management. I hope, Miſs, I ſhall have the honour to follow your fortunes; there will be no bearing this houſe when once you have left it.

Dol. No, Jenny, it would be barbarous to rob my aunt of ſo uſeful a ſecond; beſides, for miſtreſs and maid, we rather know one another a little too well.

Jen. Indeed! But here comes Mr Fungus; remember diſtance and dignity.

Dol. I warrant you, wench.

Jen. So, I ſee what I have to hope. Our young filly ſeems to be ſecure of her match: but I may joſtle her the wrong ſide the poſt; we will have a trial, however; but I muſt ſee and find out the brother.

Enter Z. Fungus, *and* Mrs Mechlin.

Fung. Yes, ſcarlet is vaſtly becoming, and takes very much with the ladies; quite proper too, as I have been in the army.

Mrs Mech. Stay where you are till you are announc'd to the lady.—Mr Fungus begs leave to throw himſelf at your ladyſhip's feet.

Dol. The mon may dra nigh.

Mrs Mech. Approach.

Fun. One, two, three, ha! Will that do?

Mrs Mech. Pretty well.

Fun. May I begin to make love?

Mrs Mech. When you will.

Fun. Now ſtand my friend, Mr Gruel. But ſhe has ſuch a deal of dignity, that ſhe daſhes me quite.

Mrs Mech. Courage.

Fun. Here, hold the paper to prompt me in caſe I ſhou'd ſtumble—Madam, or, may it pleaſe your Ladyſhip, when I preponderate the grandeur of your high ginnyalogy; and the mercantile meanneſs of my dingy deſcent; when I conſider that your anceſtors, like admiral Anſon, fail'd all round the world in the ark; and that it is a matter of doubt whether I ever had any forefathers or no; I totter, I tremble, at the thoughts of my towering ambition—Ah—a, is not Phaeton next?——

Mrs Mech. Hey!—[*Looking at the paper.*] No, Luna.

Fun. Right,—Ambition—dignity how debas'd, diſtance how great! it is as if the link ſhou'd demand an alliance with Luna, or the buſhy-bramble court the boughs of the ſtately Scotch fir; it is as if——What's next?

Mrs Mech. Next—hey!——I have loſt the place, I am afraid—Come, come, enough has been ſaid; you have ſhow'd the ſenſe you entertain of the honour. Upon theſe occaſions, a third perſon is fitteſt to cut matters ſhort. Your ladyſhip hears that——

Dol. Yes, yes, I keen weel enough what the mon wou'd be at. Mrs Mechlin has ſpear'd ſike things in your great commendations, Mr Fungus, that I cannot but ſay I clik'd a fancy to you from the very beginning.

Fun.

Fun. Much oblig'd to Mrs Mechlin, indeed, pleaſe your la'ſhip.——

Dol. You ken I am of as auncient a family as any North Briton can boaſt.

Fun. I know it full well, pleaſe your la'ſhip.

Dol. And that I ſhall get the ill-wull of a' my kin by this match.

Fun. I am ſorry for that, pleaſe your la'ſhip.

Dol. But after the ceremony, it will be proper to withdraw from town for a ſhort ſpace o' time.

Fun. Pleaſe your la'ſhip, what your la'ſhip pleaſes.

Dol. In order to gi' that goſſip Scandal juſt time to tire her tongue.

Fun. True, your la'ſhip.

Dol. I mun expect that the folk will mak' free wi' my character in chooſing ſike a conſort as you.

Fun. And with me too, pleaſe your la'ſhip.

Dol. Wi' you, mon!

Mrs Mech. Hold your tongue.

Dol. Donna you think the honor will dra' mickle envy upon you.

Fun. Oh, to be ſure, pleaſe your la'ſhip. I did not mean that.

Dol. Weel, I ſay we'll gang into the country.

Fun. As ſoon as your la'ſhip pleaſes; I have a ſweet houſe hard by Reading.

Dol. You ha'? that's right.

Fun. One of the moſt pleaſanteſt places that can be again.

Dol. Ha' you a good proſpect?

Fun. Twenty ſtage-coaches drive every day by the door, beſides carts and gentlemens carriages.

Dol. Ah, that will——

Mrs Mech. Oh, your ladyſhip will find all things prepar'd: in the next room the attorney waits with the writings.

Fun. The honour of your la'ſhip's hand——

Dol. Maiſter Fungus, you're a little too haſty.

[*Exit* Dolly.

Mrs Mech. Not till after the nuptials; you muſt not expect to be too familiar at firſt.

Fun.

Fun. Pray, when do you think we ſhall bring the bedding about?

Mrs Mech. About the latter end of the year, when the winter ſets in.

Fun. Not before?

Enter Young Loveit, *haſtily.*

Y. Lov. I hope, Madam Mechlin, I have not exceeded my hour; but I expected Mr Harpy wou'd call.

Mrs Mech. He is in the next room with a lady. Oh, Mr Fungus, this gentleman is ambitious of obtaining the nuptial benediction from the ſame hands after you.

Fun. He's heartily welcome: What, and is his wife a woman of quality too?

Mrs Mech. No, no, a cit; but monſtrouſly rich. But your lady will wonder ——

Fun. Ay, ay: but you'll follow; for I ſhan't know what to ſay to her when we are alone.—[*Exit* Fungus.

Mrs Mech. I will ſend you, Sir, your ſpouſe in an inſtant: the gentlewoman is a widow, ſo you may throw in what raptures you pleaſe.

Y. Lov. Never fear. [*Exit* Mrs Mechlin.]——And yet this ſcene is ſo new, how to acquit myſelf—let me recollect—ſome piece of a play now.—"Vouchſafe, divine perfection!"—No, that won't do for a dowager; it is too humble and whining. But ſee, the door opens, ſo I have no time for rehearſal——I have it—"Claſp'd "in the folds of love, I'll meet my doom, and act "my"——

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. Hah!

Y. Lov. By all that's monſtrous, my mother!

Mrs Lov. That rebel my ſon, as I live!

Y. Lov. The quotation was quite apropos! had it been a little darker, I might have reviv'd the ſtory of Œdipus.

Mrs Lov. So, Sirrah, what makes you from your ſtudies?

Y. Lov. A ſmall hint I receiv'd of your inclinations brought me here, Ma'am, in order to prevent, if poſſible, my father's fortune from going out of the family.

Mrs Lov. Your father! how dare you diſturb his dear aſhes? you know well enough how his dear memory melts

melts me; and that at his very name my heart is ready to break.

Y. Lov. Well said, my old matron of Ephesus.

Mrs Lov. That is what you want, you disobedient unnatural monster: but complete, accomplish your cruelty; send me the same road your villanies forc'd your father to take.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Hey day! What the deuce have we here? our old lady in tears!

Mrs Lov. Disappointed a little; that's all.

Mrs Mech. Pray, Ma'am, what can occasion——

Mrs Lov. Lord bless me, Mrs Mechlin, what a blunder you have made!

Mrs Mech. A blunder! as how?

Mrs Lov. Do you know who you have brought me?

Mrs Mech. Not perfectly.

Mrs Lov. My own son! that's all.

Mrs Mech. Your son!

Mrs Lov. Ay, that rebellious, unnatural—

Mrs Mech. Blunder indeed! But who cou'd have thought it? why, by your account, Ma'am, I imagin'd your son was a child scarce out of his frocks.

Mrs Lov. Here's company coming, so my reputation will be blasted for ever.

Mrs Mech. Never fear, leave the care on't to me.

Enter Fungus *and* Dolly.

Fun. What is the matter? you make such a noise, there is no such thing as minding the writings.

Mrs Mech. This worthy lady, an old friend of mine, not having set eyes on her son since the death of his father, and being apprised by me that here she might meet with him, came with a true maternal affection to give him a little wholesome advice.

Mrs Lov. Well said, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Which the young man returned in a way so brutal and barbarous, that his poor mother—Be comforted, Ma'am; you had better repose on my bed.

Mrs Lov. Any where to get out of his sight.

Mrs Mech. Here, Jenny.

Mrs Lov. Do you think you can procure me another party?

Mrs

Mrs Mech. Never doubt it.

Mrs Lov. Ugh, ugh—— [*Exit coughing.*

Mrs Mech. Bear up a little, Ma'am.

Fun. Fie upon you, you have thrown the old gentlewoman into the ſtericks.

Y. Lov. Sir?

Fun. You a man! you are a ſcandal, a ſhame to your ſect.

Enter Dr Catgut.

Dr Cat. Come, come, Mrs Mechlin, are the couple prepar'd? the fiddles are tun'd, the bows ready roſin'd, and the whole band—Oh, you, Sir, are one party, I reckon; but where is the—Ah, Dolly! what, are you here, my dear?

Dol. Soh!

Fun. Dolly! Who the devil can this be?

Dr Cat. As nice and as ſpruce too! the bridemaid, I warrant: why, you look as blooming, you ſlut.

Fun. What can this be? Hark ye, Sir.

Dr Cat. Well, Sir.

Fun. Don't you think you are rather too familiar with a lady of her rank and condition?

Dr Cat. Rank and condition! what, Dolly?

Fun. Dolly! what a plague poſſeſſes the man? this is no Dolly, I tell you.

Dr Cat. No!

Fun. No, this is lady Scracariſſa Mackirkincroft.

Dr Cat. Who!

Fun. Deſcended from the old, old, old earl of Glendowery.

Dr Cat. What, ſhe? Dolly Mechlin?

Fun. Dolly devil; the man's out of his wits, I believe.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Oh, Mrs Mechlin, will you ſet this matter to rights?

Mrs Mech. How, Dr Catgut!

Fun. The ſtrangeſt fellow here has danc'd up ſtairs, and has Dolly, Dolly, Dolly'd my lady; who the plague can he be?

Dr Cat. Oh, apropos, Molly Mechlin; what, is this the man that is to be married? The marriage will never hold good; why, he is more frantic and madder——

Fun,

Fun. Mad! John, fetch me the foils; I'll carte and tierce you, you ſcoundrel!

Enter Iſaac Fungus *and* Jenny.

I. Fun. Where's brother? it a'n't over; you be'n't marry'd, I hope?

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; why, what is the——

I. Fun. Pretty hands you are got into! Your ſervant, good Madam; what, this is the perſon, I warrant; ay, how pretty the puppet is painted! Do you know who ſhe is?

Z. Fun. Who ſhe is? without doubt.

I. Fun. No, you don't, brother Zac; only the ſpawn of that devil incarnate, dreſs'd out as—

Z. Fun. But hark ye, Iſaac, are—don't be in a hurry—are you ſure—

Z. Fun. Sure—the girl of the houſe, abhorring their ſcandalous project, has freely confeſſed the whole ſcheme. Jenny, ſtand forth, and anſwer boldly to what I ſhall aſk: Is not this wench the woman's niece of the houſe?

Jen. I fancy ſhe will hardly deny it.

I. Fun. And is not this miſtreſs of your's a moſt profligate——

Mrs Mech. Come, come, Maſter Iſaac, I will ſave you the trouble, and cut this matter ſhort in an inſtant. —Well then, this girl, this Dolly, is my niece; and what then?

Z. Fun. And ar'n't you aſham'd?

Y. Lov. She aſham'd! I wou'd have told you, but I cou'd not get you to liſten; why ſhe brought me here to marry my mother.

Z. Fun. Marry your mother! Lord have mercy on us, what a monſter! to draw a young man in to be guilty of incenſe. But hark ye, brother Iſaac.

[*They retire.*

Dr Cat. Gads my life, what a ſweet project I have help'd to deſtroy! But come, Dolly, I'll piece thy broken fortunes again: thou haſt a good pretty voice; I'll teach thee a thrill and a ſhake, perch thee amongſt the boughs at one of the gardens; and then as a miſtreſs, which, as the world goes, is a much better ſtation than that of a wife, not the proudeſt of them all—

Mrs

Mrs Mech. Miſtreſs! No, no, we have not manag'd our matters ſo badly. Hark ye, Mr Commiſſary?

Z. Fun. Well, what do you want?

Mrs Mech. Do you propoſe to conſummate your nuptials?

Z. Fun. That's a pretty queſtion, indeed!

Mrs Mech. You have no objection then to paying the penalty, the contract here that Mr Harpy has drawn.

Z. Fun. The contract! hey, brother Iſaac!

I. Fun. Let me ſee it.

Mrs Mech. Soft you there, my maker of candles, it is as well where it is: but you need not doubt of its goodneſs; I promiſe you, the beſt advice has been taken.

Z. Fun. What a damn'd fiend! what a harpy!

Mrs Mech. And why ſo, my good Maſter Fungus; is it becauſe I have practis'd that trade by retail which you have carried on in the groſs? What injury do I do the world? I feed on their follies, 'tis true; and the game, the plunder, is fair: but the fangs of you and your tribe,

A whole people have felt, and for ages will feel.
To their candour and juſtice I make my appeal;
Tho' a poor humble ſcourge in a national cauſe,
As I truſt I deſerve, I demand your applauſe.

EDGAR

EDGAR AND EMMELINE.

IN TWO ACTS.

By DR *HAWKESWORTH.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	Drury-Lane.	Edinburgh, 1780.	Glasgow, 1781.
MEN.			
Edgar, son to the earl of Kent, disguised as a woman, under the name of Elfrida.	Mr Obrien.	Mr Cautherley.	Mr Cautherley.
Florimond, a courtier.	Mr King.	Mr Chalmers.	Mr Kelly.
WOMEN.			
Emmeline, daughter to the earl of Northumberland, disguised as a man, under the name of Gondibert.	Mrs Yates.	Mrs Montague.	Mrs Sparks.
Elfina, a fairy.	Mr Kennedy.	Mast. Hitchcock.	Mrs Mills.
Grotilla, a fairy.	Miss Rogers.	Miss Hitchcock.	Mrs Tannet.

Other Fairies, Servants, &c.

SCENE, *Windsor Castle, and the parts adjacent.*

ACT I.

SCENE, *A dark part of Windsor Forest.*

Enter GROTILLA *meeting* ELFINA.

'*Several Fairies enter, moving to light music, and at length*
'*forming a ring and dancing.*

'*Enter another Fairy.*

'RECITATIVE.

'NOW no more in dells we sleep;
'Here our revels now we keep:
'By the moon, our silver sun—
'See, our sports are now begun!

AIR.

'Welcome, with the lambent light,
'Welcome, lovely queen of night!
'To thy gentle reign belong
'Love, and mirth, and dance, and ſong.
'War, and ſtrife, and toil, and care,
'Now their works of wo forbear:
'Night ſhall now for day atone;
'Give the night to joy alone!

'[*The* Fairy *mixes with thoſe that dance.*

'*Enter* Elfina, *an old fairy.*

'*Elf.* Hiſt—break off!—My charge receive;
'Then renew the ſports ye leave.

'*They leave off dancing: the muſic ceaſes; and*
'Elfina *beckons firſt one, then another, ſpeaking*
'*to them ſeparately*

'When the midnight-hour is nigh,
'Duteous to your taſks apply.
'You, the miſer's haunts be near,
'Break his reſt with cauſeleſs fear;
'Creak his doors, his windows ſhake,
'Till his iron heart ſhall quake.
'You, as gouty humours flow,
'Pinch the glutton by the toe.
'You, with boding dreams moleſt
'Proud ambition's anxious breaſt.
'You, with fancied ghoſts, affright
'Atheiſts in their own deſpight:
'Bold by day, the bluſt'ring ſpark
'Turns believer in the dark
'Hence—of vice to work the wo,
'And the weal of virtue, go!—

'[*The* Fairies *go out at one door; and as* Elfina
'*is going out at the other,*

'*Enter* Grotilla, *another old* Fairy.'

Grot. Siſter! ſiſter!
Elf. Whence com'ſt thou?
Grot. I come far
Elf. What to do? Tell me—
Grot. To confer with you.
Elf. Yonder— [*Pointing to the caſtle.*
Grot. What!

Elf.

Elf. The caſtle there——
Grot. Well——
Elf. Contains my preſent care.
Grot. Briefly, then, thy care unfold.
Elf. Mark! it ſhall be briefly told.
Edgar, Emmeline, you knew.
Grot. Youthful both, and fair and true.
Elf. Thus their deſtiny was read,
While the ſiſters ſpun their thread:
" This youth a maid, this maid a youth muſt find,
" The beſt, the faireſt, both in form and mind;
" Each, as a friend, muſt each eſteem, admire;
" Yet catch no ſpark of amorous deſire!
" Till this be done, no chance ſhall bliſs beſtow;
" When this is done, no chance ſhall work them wo!"
Grot. This was publiſh'd at their birth.
Elf. Right; and well 'tis known on earth.
Grot. Bleſt I wiſh them——
Elf. So do I.
Grot. Can you help them?——
Elf. Certainly
Grot. Search the iſland round and round,
None like either can be found.
Elf. Each by each muſt then be ſeen;
But not lov'd——
Grot. Hard taſk, I ween!
Elf. Hard the taſk; I know it well.
Grot. How perform it?——
Elf. I can tell
Here the king purſues the chace;
All his nobles crowd the place:
Emm'line here a youth appears,
Gondibert the name ſhe bears:
Edgar is a maid in dreſs,
Call'd Elfrida——
Grot. Now I gueſs.
Elf. To the youth, the virgin ſeems,
Like himſelf, a youth; and deems,
Like herſelf, the youth a maid;
Neither thus to love betray'd.
Grot. You contriv'd——
Elf. I did——

Grot. But——

Elf. Stay!
Mortal footsteps mark the way.
Vanish—quick! and leave me here:
If conjur'd, I must appear.

[*Exit* Grotilla; Elfina *retires.*

Enter Emmeline, *disguised in a man's habit as* Gondibert.

Emm. What a situation am I in?——Is this figure really and truly Emmeline—the beloved and only daughter of great Northumberland? Every thing about me is so like a dream, that I am frighted to think I am awake. ——O how weary I am of this dress! If I had known half that I should have suffered in it, all the fairies in the world should not have persuaded me to put it on.—If I resided here in this disguise the month of the king's hunting, I was to break the spell I was born under, and my life was to be happy—so the fairy told me!——Yet the time expires to-morrow, and nothing has happened to me but vexation and disappointment. I must once more see this powerful yet decrepit being, who, though invisible, is always within my call.——This ring, which she gave me, convenes her: if I take it off and touch it thrice, she appears——Once—twice—thrice!

[Elfina *comes forward, and touches her.*

Emm. O fairy! my situation is such as I can bear no longer.

Elf. Patience; for it ends to-morrow.

Emm. To-morrow!—to-morrow is a thousand years. ——When the horse has all he can bear, a feather will break his back.

Elf. What's the matter?

Emm. Matter! why, in the first place, I have lived almost a month in a court——

Elf. That your sorrow?

Emm. That my sorrow! Yes—I that have always lived in my father's principality, fair Northumberland, where a noble simplicity of manners showed the heart to be open and undesigning, have, by your persuasion and assistance, left it for a place where hypocrisy is avowed by the name of good-breeding; where the most shameful licentiousness is justified as gallantry; dissimulation and

and perfidy, as addreſs and good management; where ſelf-intereſt is profeſſed as the firſt principle of wiſdom, and virtue and public ſpirit derided as extravagance and ſuperſtition.

Elf. But your dreſs was your defence.

Emm. O! it is my dreſs that expoſes me to more than half that I ſuffer. When one of my own ſex is in company, I am comparatively happy; but how unfit for a woman's ear is the converſation of men, when it is not reſtrained by knowing that a woman is preſent! I begin to fear that I ſhould not have thought ſo well even of thoſe men I have been uſed to converſe with, if they had appeared to me as they appear to each other —— The friendſhip and confidence of theſe lords of the creation have almoſt robbed me, a weak woman, of my allegiance: I am frighted at the thought of living among them.

Elf. Fear not vices you deteſt.

Emm. Fear not! but what muſt I hope? O fairy! if I have implicitly followed your inſtructions, if I have hidden them in my breaſt from every friend, and even from good Northumberland my father, let me no longer ſuffer the anguiſh of ſuſpence.

Elf. Perſevere; believe; confide.

Emm. But I have yet found no object worthy of my love.

Elf. You muſt find, and know it not.
Such the fates ordain'd thy lot!

Emm. I know the myſtery of my fate—that the happineſs of my life depends upon my ſeeing and making a friend of the moſt beautiful and accompliſh d of men, without one thought of love——Alas!—forgive my doubts, my fear—ſhould you—

Elf. Hold! of foul miſtruſt beware—To morrow—

Emm. Well, then, till to-morrow——

Elf. Soft——unhallowed feet are nigh!——Florimond——

Emm. O! that wretch haunts me like my ſhadow. To rally me for what he calls my virtue, ſeems to be his ſupreme delight; he is proud of his own inſenſibility to what gives me pain: the confuſion he throws me into, he conſiders as a teſt of his own abilities and accompliſh-

ments; and as vanity is his predominant paſſion, he is ſo aſſiduous to ſecure the enjoyment of his ſuperiority, that I can ſcarce eſcape him one hour in a day.

Elf. He ſhall work thee wo and weal,
As to-morrow ſhall reveal.

Emm. But how? where?—dear, dear fairy!—

Elf. Ha, ha, ha! How and where muſt ſtill perplex ye;
And, in kindneſs, I muſt vex ye—Ha, ha, ha!
[Elfina *diſappears.*

Emm. Gone!—Myſtery, perplexity, and diſtreſs! She ſports, too, with my anxiety! I almoſt wiſh I had not truſted her: but 'tis too late—Here comes Florimond, and my torment begins.

Enter Florimond, *ſinging.*

Flor. Ha! my little Gondibertus! have I found you?——What, all alone? [*Peeping about.*] Egad I was in hopes there had been a wench in the caſe, and that I might have given thee joy of thy reformation.

Emm. Sir, I choſe to be alone. Solitude is ſometimes not only uſeful but pleaſant.

Flor. Why, 'tis a fine moon-light evening, indeed—But what the devil——

Emm. I have ſufficient ſubject for meditation, Sir; and I hoped that, as there is a ball at the caſtle to-night, you would have been better engaged than to watch my privacy.

Flor. What! better engag'd than to raiſe ſuch a recruit for the *beau monde* as thou art?——Come, come, thou ſhalt not thus ſteal away from good company to thyſelf.

Emm. Sir, upon my word, I am fit company for none but myſelf at preſent.

Flor. Pſha!——What, always muzzy, with a diſmal countenance as long as a taylor's bill! Come, cheer up, boy, I've news for thee.

Emm. For me, Sir? [*Alarm'd.*

Flor. Ay, to divert thee, I mean; that's all.

Emm. What, is it any thing uncommon, then?

Flor. No, faith, not very uncommon neither; though, perhaps, thou may'ſt make a wonder of it.—'Tis only an heireſs that's juſt run away with a young fellow.

Emm.

Emm. That, indeed, is not ſo uncommon as might be wiſh'd. But who is ſhe? is ſhe of any faſhion?

Flor. Yes, faith, ſhe is of ſome faſhion; Northumberland's fair daughter Emmeline, that's all—

Emm. Oh!——

Flor. What, thy virtue is ſhock'd at the licentiouſneſs of the age? Ha, ha, ha!—Or art thou a lover of the fair Emmeline's? hey!

Emm. [*Aſide.*] What ſhall I ſay? My confuſion will certainly betray me——'Twas only a ſudden pain ſhot croſs my breaſt. But what particulars do you hear?

Flor. Why, it ſeems ſhe got leave of her father to follow him hither; and it is juſt accidentally diſcovered, that ſhe left his caſtle the next day, tho' ſhe has not been here yet.

Emm. Well; but why do you therefore conclude that ſhe's gone off with a man?

Flor. Why, only becauſe the duke of Kent's ſon, Edgar, diſappeared upon the ſame pretence, juſt at the ſame time; and both have been miſſing ever ſince.

Emm. And is this ſufficient to authoriſe a poſitive aſſertion to the prejudice of a reputation, which hitherto not ſlander itſelf has preſum'd to ſtain?

Flor. Ha, ha, ha! Not ſlander itſelf has preſum'd to ſtain! Ha, ha, ha! [*Mimicking her.*

Emm. [*Aſide.*] O my heart! What new inſult am I doom'd to ſuffer?—You'll excuſe me, Sir, if upon this occaſion I take the liberty to tell you, that your mirth is rather ill-tim'd; and——

Flor. Sir—do you know this fair lady, that you are ſo much diſpoſed to become her knight-errant?

Emm. [*Aſide.*] I muſt be cautious, or my zeal may diſcover me.——Sir, though I ſhould not know her, it is my point of honour never to ſuffer the reputation of the abſent to be wantonly ſported away upon mere circumſtances and ſurmiſe.

Flor. Your point of honour!—why, to be ſure, all this is very fine. But I'll tell you a ſecret, my dear—As unſtain'd as you may think the fair Emmeline's reputation, there is a certain humble ſervant of your's, that ſhall be nameleſs, who has ſome ſmall reaſon to think,

think, that a certain piece of brittle ware, which she had the keeping of, may be a little crack'd—or so.

Emm. [*Aside*] A wretch! who never saw me but in this disguise—You are well acquainted with her, then?

Flor. Why—I am——

Emm. And, pray, what kind of woman is she?

Flor. Why, she's a pretty——upon my word, a very pretty wench.

Emm. But is she tall, or short, or brown, or fair?

Flor. You have never seen her, you say?

Emm. No more than I do this moment.

Flor. [*Aside.*] Then I may venture—Why, she is fair, tall, and slender; has a fine neck, a very fine neck! her limbs remarkably well-turn'd; her leg and ancle the finest I ever saw——

Emm. [*Distress'd and confounded.*] Oh!

Flor. Ay—I thought I should set you a-longing: but come, she's not to be had at present, it seems; so no more of her.

Emm. I cannot so easily dismiss her as you may imagine; and yet, perhaps, you may mistake the reason.

Flor. Very likely, faith; but what is it?

Emm. Why, I am astonish'd that you make so light of what has happen'd to her; whether you consider it as the loss of a mistress, or whether as a misfortune to a woman you must be suppos'd to have lov'd, and to whom you must have had obligations of the strongest and most tender kind: one of these lights you must see it in.

Flor. Why, my dear, as to that, I am extremely easy about losing her; for between you and I—I cou'd spare her. I must, indeed, confess, that I was very fond of her once; but, 'faith, the obligations were all on her side—'Tis among ourselves.

Emm. [*Aside.*] O, my heart! what a monstrous compound of vanity and lies is this?——How so, pray, Sir?

Flor. Why, I us'd to meet her in her father's park night after night, at the risk of my life; and, i'gad, what with the danger, and what with the fatigue, I grew tir'd of her; and, to tell you the truth, provided her another lover, to make good my retreat. 'Tis among ourselves.

Emm. Well said—and who was that, Sir?

Flor.

Flor. The very ſame Edgar that ſhe is now run away with. I thought it would be a pretty thing for him; for he is one of your fighting fellows, that is never ſo happy as when he's in danger——but I'm ſorry he has been ſo indiſcreet.

Emm. Pray, Sir—excuſe me—I don't pretend to queſtion the truth of what you ſay; but there are ſome difficulties in the ſtory that I ſhould be glad to have clear'd up—If you was ſo much in the lady Emmeline's good graces, and had, as you ſay, no diſlike to her perſon, how came you not to think of marrying her? Such an alliance, I preſume, would not have diſhonoured you.—I ſhall confound him now. [*Aſide.*

Flor. Marrying her! I'gad, ſhe knew a trick worth two o' that. I would have married her; and I told her ſo. "My dear Florimond," ſays ſhe—her arm was then lying negligently croſs my ſhoulder, thus—and ſhe look'd archly at me, thus—"My dear Florimond," ſays ſhe, "why ſhould you and I, that have now only "the power of making each other happy, ſuffer a doat-"ing old prieſt to give us the power of making each "other miſerable? If you were to be my huſband, you "might ceaſe to be my lover; and then," ſays ſhe, with a moſt roguiſh leer, "perhaps I might be tempted to take "another; you would tyrannize, I ſhould rebel; you "would enjoy nothing but the hope of breaking my "heart, and I ſhould enjoy nothing but the hope of "breaking your's."

Emm. [*Aſide.*] Still, ſtill I draw upon myſelf more confuſion.—But why, then, did ſhe run away with Edgar? That muſt ruin her ſchemes both of intereſt and pleaſure.

Flor. Nay, how the devil can I tell that?

[Emmeline *walks apart, confus'd and embarraſs'd.*

Flor. What, in your reveries!—Thou art now muſing on ſome vartuous love, like an ever faithful lovyer tell death—ha, ha, ha!—Come, come; pſha, don't be a fool; ſome kind wench now would cure you—!'gad, what think you of Elfrida?——Come along, we'll call at her apartment: perhaps ſhe's dreſſing, and we ſhall be admitted to her toilet. Upon my ſoul, a fine figure of a woman! a little maſculine, that's all; but, take my word

word for it, a delicious morſel for all that!—Hark ye—if you are not ſheepiſh, ſhe'll not be coy: 'tis among ourſelves. ——I tell you, as a friend; faith, I don't love to monopolize—I'll juſt tickle up her fancy a little, and leave you together. Come——

Emm. Pray, Sir——

Flor. I will, faith.

Emm. I muſt inſiſt——

Flor. Nay, nay, come along, come along.

[*Lays hold of her.*

Emm. Sir, I muſt abſolutely be excus'd at preſent.

Flor. Why, what a plague is it now that thou haſt taken into thy head?

Emm. Sir, I have an affair that at preſent requires me to be alone; which I cannot farther explain, than——

Flor Say no more, ſay no more. [*Aſide.*] I'gad, I have gueſs'd it now—A challenge!—Why, there's light enough for two people to cut one another's throats by, to be ſure—I'll away——Well, my dear, if I muſt leave you to the dew and the moonſhine, I muſt; but d'ye hear—'faith, I'll to Elfrida—will you follow me? If you don't ſtay too long, you'll find an *attendriſſement* that you may be oblig'd to your humble ſervant for; that's all—'tis among ourſelves.——Adieu. [*Exit.*

Emm. Why, fare thee well, thou—wretch, without a name——What will, what can, become of me! What is it that prompts this fool, whom as I never knew I never could provoke, to wrong me thus? Is it a ſacrifice to his vanity? or is it mere wantonneſs and ſport?—Pary heav'n this fairy don't deceive me!—What ſhall I do?—I muſt ſee her, and take her counſel in this new diſtreſs.

[*She takes off her ring, and touches it thrice; but the fairy does not appear.*

Ha!—ſure I dream!—Forlorn, deſerted!—this perfidious goblin?——Again I touch it; once—and twice—and thrice—and yet ſhe is not here!—O I could—But though I ſee her not, ſhe may be near me, to hear and puniſh the complaints which her unkindneſs forces from me—To whom can I now eaſe my heart!—O! ſacred friendſhip!—but here I have no friend. Elfrida—yes, ſhe indeed, as if by ſome ſecret ſympathy, claims my con-

confidence; and my heart tells me, she deserves it—Yes, I will trust her with my secret: she will be a witness for me against this slander, and assist me with her advice. [*Exit.*

[*The scene changes to* Edgar's *apartment, and discovers him at a toilet, dressing in the character of* Elfrida; *a woman attending.*

Edg. Here, give me the ribbons.——Get you gone—I'll call you when I want you.

Wom. [*Aside.*] This lady has the strangest humours! [*Exit.*

Edg. Was ever man in such ridiculous distress? I'm sure I ne'er knew any thing like it since I was Edgar the son of Kent. Here have I had a young tempting girl fiddle-faddling about me these two hours to dress me, forsooth—with an officious handiness so provoking, that no virtue under that of a stock-fish could endure it patiently. Yet an old woman upon these occasions I cannot bear: and, in short, I can no longer bear a young one.—It is my fate, they say, to be miserable if I don't get acquainted with the finest girl in England, without wishing for her; and I was told by a little goblin that started up before me, after it had led me, under the appearance of a Jack o' Lantern, into a wood, that if I could spend the king's hunting-month here in this disguise, all would be right: but how my being in petticoats should make me less likely to love a fine girl, I cannot conceive! A fine girl, indeed, may be less likely to love me; but as to myself, it is high time for me to get into breeches, that I may get out of temptation. Here they flock about me—one sits down just before me, and, without any ceremony, ties her garter—another gets me to adjust her tucker.—I'm the witness of so many pranks, and the confident of so many secrets! Then I have my hours of mortification too: I am tormented by a swarm of profligate fops, who try to debauch every woman they see, with as little concern as they take snuff; wretches who are as destitute of love as they are of virtue, and have as little enjoyment as they have understanding! And here I am obliged to mince, and pish, and fie—and affect to blush—'sdeath, when I'm

I'm burſting with indignation, and long to knock 'em down——I'll bear it no longer.

[Elfina *ſuddenly appears from under the toilet, and places herſelf before him.*]

Edg. Ha! What, again!

Elf. Again.

Edg. Art thou my good or evil genius? Tell me.

Elf. As you think me, you ſhall find me.

Edg. I will think thee, then, my good genius; for I would fain find thee ſo.

Elf. You muſt truſt me too, or elſe——

Edg. Truſt you!—Look at the figure I make here, and then judge if I have not truſted you.

Elf. But your virtue muſt be tried.

Edg. Tried!—By what new torments would you try it? Have I not ſuffered the two worſt things in nature, temptation and ſuſpence? Have not I——

Elf. No—you have not perſevered: all is loſt if you give out.

Edg Reſolve my doubts, then; torment me no longer with ſuſpence: let me be certain of the event, and I will be an anchorite, in ſpite of this habit and all its works, a month longer.

Elf. Well—Obſerve me, then, and learn.

Edg. [*eagerly*] What ſhall I learn?

Elf. Patience, Edgar!—Fare thee well. Ha, ha!

[*A machine riſes under her, and carries her away.*

Edg. Derided, and forſaken!——I doubt this is one of the wanton and miſchievous elves that tantalize poor mortals for their own diverſion: however, as I have played in the farce ſo long, I'll not ſtop in the laſt ſcene.——

Enter Woman.

Wom. Ma'am, here's my Lord Trifle has ſent his compliments to your la'ſhip, and begs to know whether he ſhall have the honour of waiting upon your la'ſhip to the ball.

Edg. [*recovering his female attitude and accent.*] My compliments, am much oblig'd to his lordſhip, but am engag'd.

Wom. Yes, Ma'am.

Edg. Hark ye——

Wom. Ma'am.

Edg. Has Gondibert call'd here this evening?

Wom. No, Ma'am.

Edg. Nor ſent?

Wom. No, Ma'am. [*Exit.*

Edg. There's a man, now, who might atone for the vices of the whole ſex! I am ſo anxious to recommend myſelf to him, even in this diſguiſe; and feel ſuch a reluctance to do any thing that may diſguſt him, even while he thinks me a woman; that when he is preſent, I labour to make my manner ſuit with my appearance, I know not how, by a kind of involuntary effort. How ſtrange is the rapidity with which ſome minds unite!

Enter Woman.

Wom. Ma'am, there's Count Florimond.

Edg. Did not I tell you——

Wom. Yes, Ma'am; and I told him—but he ſaid he knew your la'ſhip was at home, and that he muſt ſee you.

Edg. Muſt ſee me!

Wom. Yes, Ma'am; and though I told him your la'ſhip was a-dreſſing, yet he would follow me——O Lord, he's the ſtrongeſt man——He's here, an pleaſe your la'ſhip——

Enter Florimond.

Edg. [*Aſide.*] What a farce muſt I now act! Pray heav'n it has not a tragical cataſtrophe!

Flor. My dear goddeſs!

Edg. Lord, how can you be ſo monſtrous rude!——burſting into one's dreſſing room——and putting one into ſuch flurries——

[*He fumbles at pinning on a breaſt-knot.*

Flor. That your heart beats in concert with mine——The dear toilet is not more the altar of beauty than of love——Permit me the honour, Ma'am, of aſſiſting to place that envied ornament on your boſom.

Edg. Lord, Sir!—I beg—not for the world—you quite confound me——

Flor. [*preſſing.*] My life! my angel!——

[*Catches him haſtily round the waiſt, and endeavours to kiſs him; upon which* Edgar *gives him a ſmart blow on the ear.*

Edg. Nay, then there is no expedient——

Flor. [*retreating backward.*] Ma'am!———

[Edgar *ſtamps, and* Florimond *ſtarts and retreats farther back at the ſame time.*

Emmeline, *as* Gondibert, *appears at the door.*

Flor. I proteſt, Ma'am——[*Frighted.*]

Edg. [*ſternly.*] And I proteſt, Sir———

Flor. Ma'am, I beg——

Edg. And I beg, Sir——

Flor. [*turning, and ſeeing* Gondibert.] O——— Ma'am, your moſt humble ſervant. [*Going.*

Emm. [*Aſide to* Flor.] Sir——I am under very great obligations to you——but I would not have you tickle up her fancy any more, upon my account.

Flor. Deuce take you!——I wiſh you had been as near her as I was.

[*Is going, but again ſtops and adjuſts his wig by a pocket mirrour.*

Edg. [*to* Emmeline, *recovering himſelf, and adjuſting his dreſs.*] Lord, Sir—I'm in ſuch a flurry—I, I, I, I'm very ſorry I ſhould have been provok'd to any thing ſo unbecoming the delicacy of my ſex.

Flor. Upon my ſoul, ſo am I too———Sir, your humble ſervant. [*Exit.*

Emm. You have no reaſon to apologize for your indignation, Madam; though your blow was ſomething ſpirited, I muſt confeſs.

Edg. I'm in ſuch confuſion, Sir—and he has made me ſuch a figure!——to treat me with indecent familiarities!

Emm. Dear Madam, compoſe yourſelf, and think no more of him. He has not been much better company to me than he has to you, I'll aſſure you.

Edg. Lord, Sir, you ſurpriſe me!———Pray, what impertinence has he been guilty of to you?

Emm. He has been filling my ears with ſcandal, Madam; a ſubject which ſeems to be equally ſuitable both to his abilities and diſpoſition! He has been telling me, that Edgar———

Edg. Who, Sir? [*Haſtily.*]

Emm. Edgar, Madam, the ſon of the earl of Kent—

Edg.

Edg. What of him, Sir?——what ſcandal has he ſpread of Edgar?——

Emm. [*Aſide.*] Ha! ſo intereſted!——She loves him, ſure.

Edg. Let me conjure you, Sir, if this wretch has ſaid any thing to diſhonour Edgar, you would tell it to me.

Emm. [*Aſide.*] It muſt be ſo——Your very earneſtneſs forbids me, Madam.

Edg. I know I'm mov'd, and you muſt think it ſtrange.

Emm. [*ſurpris'd at the maſculine tone and manner into which his earneſtneſs involuntarily betrays him.*] Strange, indeed!——

Edg. Perhaps, 'tis ſtranger ſtill than you can think.

Emm. Your manner, Madam——

Edg. No matter——Forms and modes become trifles too ſmall for notice, when they ſtand in competition with a friend's good name.

Emm. [*Aſide.*] Her love is to diſtraction——She frights me, and is not to be truſted———

Edg. Let me conjure you——tell me———

Emm. I cannot tell you, Madam.

Edg. Cannot!

Emm. I ought not—Truſt me, there are reaſons—Let it ſuffice, that in the ſtory I have heard, a lady's honour is as much concerned as Edgar's; that the ſlander cannot intereſt you more than me; that I will do my utmoſt to make its falſehood ſo notorious, that it cannot be believ'd; and I intreat that, as you tender your peace, you would as yet inquire no farther——I know myſelf not proof againſt your importunity; and therefore you will excuſe me, if, having no other way, I ſave myſelf by flight. [*Exit.*

[Edgar *runs out after her, but returns.*

Edg. Curſe on this cumberſome habit! I cannot overtake him. Was ever any thing ſo vexatious! I have been defam'd by ſome ſcandalous falſehood, and I muſt do my honour juſtice——I can, at a ſmall expence of diſſimulation, get that wretch, Florimond, to repeat to me all that he has told to Gondibert: I will do it——and

I will as yet lie in ambush under this disguise, to make sure of my blow. [*Exit.*

Emmeline, *as* Gondibert, *re-enters.*

Emm. She's gone!——What can I, or what ought I to do? If I had told her the story, I must have discovered myself to convince her it could not be true: but who knows what a jealous woman might have thought upon finding the very person who is said to have gone off with her lover in so strange a disguise!——Yet she will certainly contrive to hear it from Florimond; and then, good heaven! what will she suffer, if I do not convince her that it is false!——I must, I will trust her——I have no other chance to save her, but by making a discovery, which, if I had really gone off with Edgar, it is certain I should not have made, especially to her. But I must not intrude upon her now: I will plant myself where I may intercept her before she can see Florimond, and trust to generous friendship for the event. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE, *The Terrace at Windsor Castle.*

Enter FLORIMOND, *with a Letter.*

FLORIMOND.

AYE——she was obliged to be angry, because that fool Gondibert appear'd just in the critical minute at the door——Pox take him!——I might have known it was not natural by her overdoing it——it was, indeed, overdone with a vengeance! But now she's in the panics, lest I should resent it. Now she has something to say—and—if I am disengag'd—she will be glad to meet me upon the terrace. If I should humble her now, and not meet her—but that would be cruel. I will, however, take some state upon me——I will look a little formal; it may save me some trouble in my future advances——Here she comes.

Enter Edgar, *still disguis'd as* Elfrida.

[Florimond *receives him with an air of negligent haughtiness, and makes a formal bow.*

Edg. Sir, I hope you will not take any advantage of my weakness——

Flor.

Flor. [*turning from her.*] Weakneſs! pox on you—Your weakneſs don't lie in your arm, I'm ſure o' that.

Edg. [*following.*] Or ſuppoſe, Sir, that whatever reaſon I may have for deſiring this meeting—What airs the wretch gives himſelf! [*Aſide.*]—— I ſay, Sir, that you would not ſuppoſe—I cannot contain myſelf.——

[*Aſide.*

Flor. Poor ſoul! what confuſion! I will relax a little of my ſeverity. [*Aſide.*]—Madam, I will ſuppoſe nothing, but that you have given me another opportunity of hearing your commands.

Edg. I think, Sir, you was telling Gondibert a certain affair between you and Edgar and a lady; and ſomething that, by his manner of telling it, I could not very well underſtand.

Flor. [*Aſide.*] Aye——a very good introduction——a love-ſtory is a moſt excellent prelude to a love-ſcene ——I perceive we are to adjourn.——Why, Madam, a certain fair lady, call'd Emmeline, has thought fit to make Edgar as happy as any man can be made, except him, Madam, whom you ſhall pleaſe to honour with the ſame favour.———Upon my ſoul, ſhe's a fine creature!

Edg. Sir, your compliments really put me ſo out of countenance—that I ſhall bluſh to death—

Flor. Your bluſhes are ſo becoming, Madam, that——

Edg. Give me leave, Sir, to intreat that you would at preſent ſpare my confuſion, and tell me all the particulars of that affair which have come to your knowledge.

Flor. Aye——ſhe wants a luſcious deſcription, now. [*Aſide.*]—Why, Madam, I preſume that Edgar, being fir'd with the charms of Emmeline, firſt gaz'd languiſhingly upon her; caught her eyes the firſt time they were caſually turn'd upon him; when, to a ſoft confuſion, ſhe haſtily turn'd her look downward, and bluſh'd; he took her hand, firſt preſſing it gently in his own, then raiſing it to his lips; then, Madam, I preſume he might proceed in———

Edg. Sir!——I ſhall certainly be out of patience, and knock him down. [*Aſide.*]——Sir, if you have any

desire to oblige me—I—or have any expectations, Sir, of favours—Not, Sir, that I—

Flor. My dear angel, keep me no longer in suspence; let me know your commands, that I may fulfil the condition of——— [*Pressing.*

Edg. [*drawing back.*] Hold, Sir—You must then, without farther delay or interruption, give me a direct answer to a few short questions.

Flor. Why, Madam, it shall then be in your own way.

Edg. First then, Sir, are you acquainted with Edgar, the young heir of Kent?

Flor. Why, Madam, to proceed implicitly as you direct, I believe there are few persons who know more of that gentleman than your humble servant.

Edg. [*aside.*] Matchless impudence!——And pray, Sir, what kind of a youth is he?

Flor. [*aside.*] I see by her curiosity she don't know him.——Why, Madam, the youth is a, a, a, rather soft ——a green youth, Madam, as we say——

Edg. Sir, these are terms that I do not perfectly comprehend; and therefore I beg you would be more explicit.

Flor. Why then, explicitly, Madam, he is, upon my soul, a shallow fellow——a very shallow fellow, faith—— 'Tis among ourselves.

Edg. He is?

Flor. He is indeed, Madam——The poor devil has some aukward good-nature, and I have a kindness for him; but between you and I, he'll never be so much a man of honour as I cou'd wish him—

Edg. [*forgetting his femine character, and running up to him.*] How, villain!——

Flor. [*frightened, and drawing back.*] Ma'am!—

Edg. [*aside.*] What have I done! [*He draws himself again into form.*] To think of villainy in people that, by their rank, are set up as examples to others, quite transports me out of myself—Heigh ho!——It has quite overcome me.

[*Affects to be faint, and takes out a smelling bottle.*

Flor. [*aside.*] What a terrible virago it is!——May I presume, Madam, to lend you my hand?

[*Approaching cautiously.*

Edg.

Edg. It is over, Sir——I'm ſo ſubject to flurries——and my poor nerves are ſo ſhattered——I'm extremely oblig'd to you for this character of Edgar!—To have been guilty of any thing baſe!—

Flor. Very baſe, I aſſure you, Madam.——

Edg. Sir!——[*Aſſuming a fierce maſculine air, but inſtantly correcting himſelf.*]

Flor. Ma'am! [*Starting back.*]——Fore gad, ſhe's mad!——and upon my ſoul, in my opinion, damnably miſchievous. [*Aſide.*

Edg. Give me leave, Sir——as well as I am able——to aſk you what in particular has——but I ſee company coming——If we walk this way, we ſhall avoid them.

Flor. [*aſide.*] Avoid them!——Heaven forbid!——Perhaps, Madam, another time——

Edg. Sir, I ſhall die, if my curioſity is not gratified.

Flor. Madam——at preſent I am——

Edg. Sir, I beg——for my reputation, that we may not be ſurpris'd together while I am in this diſorder.

Flor. By no means, Madam——let us part this moment——If you'll go off one way, I'll go the other.

Edg. O not for the world!——To be ſeen to part haſtily, upon being obſerved together, would be the ſubject of eternal ſcandal.—Let me beg the favour of your arm—— [*Lays hold of his arm.*

Flor. [*crying out.*] Lard Gad, Madam!——

Edg. Sir!

Flor. You'll pince it through——

Edg. Lord, Sir, 'tis my fright——One naturally claſps any thing hard in a fright.

Flor. Madam, you do me honour——

[Edgar *holds his arm; he keep as far off as he can, and fixes his eyes upon him as they go out.*

By the heavens! ſhe has the grip of a bum-bailiff. [*Aſide.*] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *the dark Grove.*

Enter Elſina.

'*Elf.* Siſter! ſiſter! [Grotilla *ſuddenly appears.*

'*Grot.* ——Here am I.

'*Elf.* Now the fated hour is nigh,
'Keep the lovers in your eye.

'Each

'Each to each shall soon be known;
'Each for each was born alone.
'*Grot.* Florimond, the caitiff vile——
'*Elf.* They shall prosper by his guile:
'(Evil we for good permit)
'This their friendship's knot shall knit.
'But the fated hour is nigh——
'Come, ye elves, whose minds perceive,
'By secret impulse, what I will;
'Come, your sports this moment leave,
'And what I ordain fulfil.
'[*Many fairies suddenly appear.*
'Now the fated hour is nigh,
'To rites that charm from ill apply.
'Form the circle on the dew,
'[*They form a ring.*
'Round, and round, the track renew——
[*They dance.*
'Mark it thrice, and thrice again——
'Join with me the magic strain.

'SONG.

'By the bat's nocturnal flight
'O'er the sleeping plants and flow'rs;
'By the moon's inconstant light,
'Potent spell of midnight hours——
'By the ring of various dies,
'Circling oft the silver ball;
'By the genial mists that rise,
'By the virgin-dews that fall——
'By the meteor's gleamy spark,
'Wand'ring o'er the reedy lake;
'Stars that shoot athwart the dark,
'Lights from polar skies that break——
'By night, and all things that to night pertain——
'Ye rival powers, from adverse arts abstain!
'Intrude not now my purpose to contest;
'But let the pair that I would bless, be blest.
'*Elf.* Cease, the fated hour is nigh!——
'Cease, and to the castle fly!
'Careful watch the great event,
'Finish'd ere the day be spent.
'[*Fairies and the scene disappear together.*

En-

Enter Emmeline, *ſtill diſguis'd as* Gondibert.

Emm. She's gone out, and I have unfortunately miſſed her——She's certainly gone to Florimond—Ha! yonder they are——Yes, it is certainly ſo——What violent emotion!——Now they move haſtily forward—Now ſhe ſtops ſhort—her geſtures are ſcarce feminine——Now ſhe recovers herſelf——Florimond, too, ſeems to be frighted out of his gallantry, and extremely willing to put an end to the converſation——'Tis over! he leaves her, and ſhe comes this way.——Yes, I will open my whole heart to her; not for my ſake now, but her own. Whatever are the firſt fallies of her ſurpriſe and paſſion, ſhe muſt at length feel and return my friendſhip.——Here ſhe comes: I muſt not accoſt her too abruptly. [*Retires to a little diſtance.*

Enter Edgar, *ſtill as* Elfrida. *Seeing* Emmeline, *he ſtops ſhort.*

Edg. Ha! Gondibert——I know the generous reaſon, now, of his reſerve. In this diſguiſe, what could my intereſt in Edgar appear to him but love?—and if it had been ſo, how muſt I have been hurt by what he had to tell me!—But he is not leſs intereſted in the lady—ſo he ſaid——Sure then he is to Emmeline what he thought Edgar was to me!—Let me, then, repay his generous kindneſs; let me diſcover, not only what but who I am, to convince him that the tale is falſe, which, if true, muſt deſtroy his peace. [*Going up to* Emmeline.]——You need not ſhun me, Sir; I have now nothing to aſk that you would wiſh to conceal; I have only to requeſt, that you would forgive me for having violated your injunction not to ſatisfy the curioſity you had raiſed. I am appriſed of your kind, your generous motive; and it has inſpired my breaſt with all that it is poſſible I ſhould feel for you, a grateful and ardent friendſhip.

Emm. Your love, Madam, I make no doubt, is fixed on a much nobler and more deſerving object. Edgar, I preſume——

Edg. My connection with Edgar, Sir, is indeed, in ſome ſenſe, the reaſon why your merit cannot make an impreſſion, which I am not aſhamed to ſay it might otherwiſe have done: and yet, Sir, let me confeſs that

I am not affected by the ſtory of his diſappearing with Emmeline, as you might reaſonably imagine, becauſe I know for certain that it cannot be true.

Emm. [*haſtily.*] Ha! that it cannot be true—

Edg. I now owe your friendſhip a diſcovery, if indeed it is a diſcovery, which I was prompted by mere regard to myſelf to have made before: I think there is a connection between you and Emmeline, that——

Emm. There is, indeed, a connection, Madam—a ſecret which you convince me it is now in vain to affect to hide——

Edg. Let me, then, claim it—But let me firſt, as a pledge of that friendſhip which I hope ſhall end but with our lives, give for your ſecret mine——

Emm. Do not, then, keep me longer in ſuſpence; for ſtill the more we talk, the more I am perplex'd.—[*Aſide.*] What can her ſecret be?

Edg. Why, then, in the firſt place, Sir—I am—a man——

Emm. [*aſide, with great emotion, which ſhe labours to conceal.*] A man!——Good heav'n! what will become of me?

Edg. And now, let me at once embrace you as a friend: punctilios and forms no longer part us—

[*As* Edgar *advances eagerly to* Emmeline, *ſhe hides her face, and appears in great confuſion.*

Edg. [*haſtily.*] What ails my friend?

Emm. O! you have ruined all my pleaſing project—prevented——but no matter——

Edg. This is amazing! For heaven's ſake, what d'ye mean?—You was not, ſure, enamour'd of my perſon—

Emm. O! no——You ſtill miſtake——

Edg. Then tell me my miſtake; for we may now converſe on even terms: our hearts may now be opened to each other, without the forms and the reſerve preſcribed in friendſhips with the ſofter ſex.

Emm. O! ſtill you wander, wider and wider ſtill—I cannot ſpeak——

Edg. You muſt—There is a ſecret which, but now, your heart was ready to reveal——

Emm. And then I thought it known—but now—

Edg.

Edg. Now my warm heart has claimed you for my friend——

Emm. And now to tell it, is impoſſible—I cannot tell it—and if I could, you would not find the friendſhip that you hope——

[Edgar *looks earneſtly at her, wondering and embarraſs'd.*

[*Aſide.*] I ſicken at his ſight—Oh my heart!

Edg. I'm all perplexity and wonder!—Your colour comes and goes, like a ſick girl's—[*She becomes more confuſed, as he marks her confuſion.*]——You tremble!—Heaven's! he faints!—[*He catches her in his arms, and diſcovers her breaſt.*] By all my wonder and my joy, a woman!——How lovely her confuſion!—O let my boſom warm thee back to life! Look up, and truſt the honour of my love: you ſhall not whiſper what you would conceal; nor will I ſeek to know it. [*She recovers.*

Emm. O! let me hide me from myſelf—my ſex thus known—in this diſguiſe! Where ſhall my conſcious bluſhes find a veil?——Who are you? Tell me, that I may hide me from your ſight for ever.

Edg. Oh! no—On that condition, let me ne'er be known.

Emm. Yet tell me—truſt me——

Edg. Truſt thee! Yes, with my life I'd truſt thee! Thy friend!—O! know me by a ſofter name—is Kent's young heir; that Edgar you have heard ſo falſely and ſo wantonly tradue'd.

Emm. Still wonders crowd on wonders!

Edg. I dream myſelf, or this is all enchantment.

Emm. So might you think, indeed, if more you knew me.

Edg. Let me, then, know thee more, whom now I know as the moſt fair and gentle of thy ſex; whom yet I ſaw and lov'd without deſire—my pledge of happineſs!—May I be thine!—But yet I rave—thy fate was not like Edgar's——

Emm. Spare me—thy words have pow'r, which yet thou know'ſt not.

Edg. O! take me from the rack! My thoughts grow wild!——There is, indeed, a maid, whoſe fate I've heard was ſuch as mine—that Emmeline—O! heav'n, that

that Emmeline, in whom I thought thy intereſt, love——O! yes, it muſt, it ſhall—thou, thou art ſhe!

Emm. Leave me, or I ſhall die with my confuſion—

Edg. Let me ſupport thee, hide thee in my breaſt, where thou ſhalt breathe thy anſwer in a ſigh.——Art thou not Emmeline, my fated love?

Emm. If Emmeline be thy fated love—I am——

Edg. Still let me claſp thee cloſe, and cloſer ſtill; calm all the tumults of thy feeling mind, and ſoothe thee into confidence by love.

Emm. No; let me now retire; for in this dreſs I cannot bear to ſee myſelf or you.

Edg. Yet ſtay—forgive the violence I do you. My fame and your's are wantonly traduc'd; 'tis fit that we do juſtice to them both, and puniſh the traducer.

Emm. He is not worth reſentment.

Edg. He is for others ſakes, though not his own—I have a thought, would Emmeline but join——

Emm. Tell me, then, quickly.

Edg. Send him a challenge in behalf of Emmeline, as Gondibert; and meet him, not as Gondibert, but Emmeline: I will take care to be preſent, not as Elfrida, but Edgar: he will then be ſelf-convicted as a liar, by knowing neither of the perſons he has defam'd; and we may farther puniſh him as we pleaſe.

Emm. Well, I will try at this; but now diſmiſs me.

[*She breaks from his hand, and runs off.*

Edg. Farewel, my love!——How has the hand of heav'n vouchſafed to guide me through all the mazes of my fate to bliſs! Even my revenge, my juſtice rather, upon that wretch, whoſe very folly is invenom'd, ſhall be complete——But a mind ſo baſe can never be brave—Suppoſe he ſhould not come——He's here.

Enter Florimond. *Seeing* Edgar, *he ſtops ſhort.*

Flor. Gad take me—this damn'd madwoman is certainly fated to be my death.

[Edgar *advances towards him; he draws back, and looks frighted.*

Edg. Sir, I am ſo ſhock'd when I reflect upon the indecorums that my paſſions have made me guilty of to you, and my poor ſpirits are ſo flurried, that I really am not able to make my apology.

Flor.

Flor. Ma'am, I am extremely ſorry——and, Ma'am, —I muſt abſolutely fly from your ladyſhip's apology—— [*Going.*

Edg. Sir, I muſt beg the favour of your ear for a few minutes——I hope, Sir, you will pardon my confuſion ——I have ſomething to ſay to you, Sir, that——Let me beg, Sir, that you would come a little nearer——

Flor. [*aſide.*] Pox on her——ſhe wants to faſten her damn'd claws upon me again——[*To her.*] Your commands, Madam, always do me honour—And upon my ſoul, always leave me black and blue. [*Aſide.*

Edg. I have juſt heard, Sir, ſomething that has fluſtered me to ſuch a degree——

Flor. [*aſide.*] Ay——another fright! ſhe'll certainly lay hold of me—[*Retiring.*] Ma'am—a, a, a, I hope there's no danger threatens your ladyſhip——

Edg. Not directly me, Sir; nor indeed much danger to you: but I was willing you ſhould be prepar'd——

Flor. Danger—prepared——For heav'n's ſake, Madam, what d'ye mean?

Edg. Why, Gondibert, Sir——you'll excuſe my freedom—Lard, that I ſhould be ſo indiſcreet—I'm ſenſible that the intereſt I take in this affair, may be liable to conſtructions of ſuch a nature—that—

Flor. Lord, Ma'am, if there is any villainous deſign againſt me, I beſeech you to let me know it—[*Looking about.*] Perhaps we had better change our ground; ſome villain may be taking aim at me as I ſtand.

Edg. You need not be under ſuch apprehenſions, Sir; it is a matter of no conſequence——It is only that Gondibert is to ſend you a challenge for the liberty you have taken with lady Emmeline; that's all——

Flor. Oh, if 'tis only an intention of Gondibert to cut my throat, to be ſure that's a matter of no conſequence—A bloody-minded ruffian! [*Aſide.*

Edg. Why, Sir, to my certain knowledge, Gondibert knows no more of a ſword than a girl of eighteen; and has not a grain more courage.

Flor. [*taking courage.*] Why, as to that, Madam—

Edg. As to that, Sir, I am confident it would make no difference to you; but as I know he won't fight, and

only presumes upon an insolent opinion that count Florimond's courage is as questionable as his own——

Flor. [*blustering.*] How, Madam!

Edg. Lard, Sir, if you are so violent, I shall certainly fall into my tremors——I shall certainly want the support of your arm.

Flor. [*aside.*] Mercy upon me! and I shall want but very little killing afterwards if you do.

Edg. I say, Sir, I think he should be properly expos'd; and I hope you'll act accordingly.

Flor. Madam—excuse me—a coward is my aversion; and you may depend upon his being chastised with most exemplary severity—But I should be sorry to mistake his character. [*Aside.*]—You know he won't fight?——

Edg. [*a little hastily.*] Sir, if you suspect my veracity——

Flor. O Lord, Madam—no, not in the least.

Edg. You'll excuse me, Sir; I am really asham'd—of the liberty I have taken——Sir, your humble servant.

[*Exit.*

Flor. Madam, your most obedient——Thank heav'n she's gone—It was a lucid interval; but it would not have been of much longer continuance. I'm oblig'd to her though, for her information—indeed am I—Egad, I'll make a figure in this business——But, if the challenge is coming, I must be at home to receive it.

[*Exit.*

'*Enter several* Fairies.

'1 *Fairy.* Come away, come away!
'We have jubilee to-day.
'2 *Fairy.* Wherefore, wherefore?
'3 *Fairy.* Tell me.
'4 *Fairy.* Tell me.
'1 *Fairy.* Ere the ev'ning sheds the dew,
'You shall know; and you, and you.
'2 *Fairy.* What is finish'd?
'3 *Fairy.* What is plann'd?
'1 *Fairy.* Peace—the sisters are at hand.'

Enter Elfina '*and* Grotilla, *with many* Fairies *in grotesque characters.*'

Elf. Now we triumph!—now 'tis past!
Spells are broken, joy shall last!

Let the voice of muſic riſe;
Muſic, grateful to the ſkies.

AIR, *with Chorus.*

We triumph, we triumph, with victory bleſt;
And beauty and truth are of pleaſure poſſeſs'd.
Let mortals be told, and rejoice in the ſound,
" No lovers henceforward by fate ſhall be bound:"
There's now no conditions of pleaſure but two,
Which they all may fulfil—to be tender and true.
Da capo.

' *Elf.* Now let ev'ry elf and fay
' Dance the laughing hours away:
' Let your nimble feet rebound,
' Lightly from the daiſied ground;
' Trip it round, and round, and round.
[*A dance.*

' *Elf.* [*ſtopping ſuddenly.*] Hiſt—a mortal foot is nigh;
' None muſt here remain but I.
[*Exeunt all but* Elfina, *who retires to the back of the* ' *ſtage.*'

Enter Florimond.

Flor. This is the place, and this is the time——but I ſee no ſigns of my little Gondibertus——Ha! here comes a *bona roba*, whom I have not the honour to know—Egad, this affair will turn out with an eclat—very much to my honour—I'll make the moſt of it: I'll let her into my buſineſs here, without ſeeming to ſee her.

[Emmeline *enters in her own habit, and obſerves him. He affects not to ſee her; but walks haſtily to and again, often looking on his watch, affecting great impatience, and ſpeaking as to himſelf.*

A poltroon! not to meet me upon his own challenge—I'll make him know what it is to inſult a man of honour——If the wretch had met with me, I would have given him his life; but now to ſpare him—a ſcandal to mankind! Ha! [*Affects to be ſurpriſed at ſeeing* Emmeline.] Death, interrupted and diſcovered!—[*Half aſide.*] Madam—I proteſt—I am confounded—I am afraid that my natural impetuoſity has a, a, a——

Emm. Sir, I am very ſorry that I ſhould have intru-

ded upon your privacy; but, perhaps, I have prevented something that would have had worse consequences.

Flor. Madam, I am not at liberty——

Emm. By the few words, Sir, which now involuntarily escaped you, I know that you are waiting here upon an affair of honour—but I intreat—

Flor. Madam, it is impossible—nothing but his life can atone for the insult.

Emm. You will excuse a woman, tho' a stranger, Sir, upon such an occasion: may I intreat to know, Sir, who has had the misfortune to incur the resentment of a gentleman, who seems so little to deserve ill treatment and so able to punish it?

Flor. Madam, you do me honour.—She is making advances already. [*Aside.*]—Why, Madam, as the treatment I have received makes it an act of justice to tell what I should otherwise rather die than discover, I will comply with your request—Hem! A little dirty dependent upon the court, here, Madam, one Gondibert, thought fit to send me a challenge, upon account of something I happened to say concerning a lady, in whose good graces I happen'd to be, and whom a foolish young fellow that I was a friend to has thought fit to run away with; and, Madam, though I have so far treated him like a gentleman as to accept his challenge, he has not come to the place appointed, and it is now half an hour past the time.

Emm. [*looking out.*] Methinks I see somebody at a distance coming this way; perhaps that may be the gentleman——

Flor. [*starting, and looking out as afraid.*] Ah! egad that's certainly he—[*Aside.*] Now, if he should not be a coward at last—Madam, a, a, a, for God's sake retire—for—a, a, a.

Emm. Sir, I believe it will not be necessary; for I'm pretty sure now that the gentleman is a friend of mine—

Flor. A friend of your's, Madam! pray, who is he?

Emm. A gentleman, Sir, who, I am sure, will be extremely glad to be better known to you.

Enter Edgar, *in his proper dress.*

Emm. [*aside.*] Yes, 'tis he, 'tis Edgar! with what elegance and dignity he looks the man!

Edg.

Edg. [*aſide.*] How ſoft, how lovely, in her female dreſs!

Emm. [*to* Florimond.] Sir, as we are now no longer alone, I may confeſs that I am not altogether a ſtranger to your perſon or your merit.—[*To* Edgar.] Sir, this is Florimond, a gentleman to whom both you and I have ſome obligations, which I believe he is not at preſent aware of.

Flor. Upon my word, Madam, you abſolutely confound me—this exceſſive honour—is it poſſible that I ſhould have been ſo happy as to confer obligations —— Pray, Madam, may I crave the honour of your name?

Edg. Do you not at all recollect that lady, Sir?

Flor. Upon my ſoul, Sir, I cannot ſay that I do.

Edg. Who, now, do you think it can poſſibly be, of all that your polite generoſity has oblig'd?

Flor. Let me periſh, Sir, if I can tell.

Edg. Why, Sir, that lady is one Emmeline; with whom, as ſhe tells me, you was formerly moſt intimately acquainted; and whom you lately converſed with, Sir, in diſguiſe, by the name of Gondibert: 'tis among ourſelves——What! quite confounded, Sir?

Flor. [*recovering himſelf.*] Ha, ha, ha! confounded! Ha, ha, ha! No, no, Sir: you have had your jeſt, and I have had mine. I knew well enough who I was talking to when I play'd upon the little Gondibertus—Ah! I thought I ſhould make you ſmart for your frolic—— I told Elfrida my whole ſcheme——

Edg. You told Elfrida your whole ſcheme——

Emm. But pray, Sir, as you did not know my perſon in my own dreſs, how came you to know me in diſguiſe?

Flor. Why, Madam, to confeſs the truth, I was let into the ſecret by a friend.—[*Aſide.*] Egad, this goes ſwimmingly——

Edg. Well, Sir; but pray, give me leave to bring you acquainted with a perſon, who, I'm ſure, you are at preſent totally a ſtranger to —— Pray, who do you think I am?

Flor. [*aſide.*] Heaven knows! but I wiſh I was fairly out of your clutches—Upon my ſoul, Sir, I have not the honour to know you, any otherwiſe than as a gen-

tleman whom I ſhould be extremely proud to conſider as my friend.

Edg. Why, Sir, I have the honour to be one Edgar; a very ſhallow fellow, Sir, that you had ſome kindneſs for, becauſe he was aukwardly good natured: I have alſo had the honour to receive ſeveral of your civilities, under the name of Elfrida—'Tis among ourſelves.

Flor. Sir, your moſt humble ſervant—I have at this time ſome urgent buſineſs——

Edg. So have I, Sir; and therefore you muſt not leave me yet—You may remember, Sir, that you told me your whole ſcheme to puniſh Emmeline for her frolic, and to mortify her with ſtories of herſelf by way of joke.

Flor. Sir, I beſeech you——

Edg. Sir, I am extremely ſorry for the occaſion; but as this lady has not got her fighting cloaths on, you muſt excuſe me if I take her challenge upon myſelf; and ſo, Sir——[*Draws.*] 'Tis among ourſelves.

Emm. What has my thoughtleſs indiſcretion done!

Flor. Ah, dear Sir, now you are too ſerious——

Emm. This muſt not be—For heav'n's ſake, Edgar, hear me!

Edg. Fear not, my love—Sir, whatever you may think, this is but ſport to what is to follow—and ſo, Sir, without more words——

Flor. O Lord, Sir!—I beſeech you, Madam—

Emm. For my ſake, Edgar——

Edg. Truſt me—Draw, Sir, or——

Flor. Sir, I don't deſire to do you any harm; I don't, upon my ſoul, Sir.

Edg. Scoundrel, coward, draw!

Emm. Conſider, Edgar——

Flor. Ay, do, dear Sir, conſider——

Edg. Conſider what?

Flor. That I am but a poor, miſerable, lying coxcomb, Sir——Indeed, Sir, I am——

Emm. It is better to diſmiſs him, Edgar, as beneath your reſentment.

Flor. So it is, indeed, Sir—a great deal better.

Emm. He is worthy only of contempt.

Flor. It is very true indeed, Sir.

Edg.

Edg. Art thou not a wretch, without the leaſt principle of truth or honour?

Flor. Yes, Sir.

Edg. Art thou not infamous, as a ſlanderer and a coward?

Flor. Yes, Sir.

Edg. Have not thy very follies the malignity of vices? and is it not a diſgrace to nature, to conſider thee as a man?

Flor. Any thing, dear Sir, if you will but ſpare my life—If you chooſe any other ſatisfaction, Sir; if you would be content to kick me into ſome dark corner, and leave me, I ſhould think myſelf under infinite obligations to you.

Edg. Hence then—and be thyſelf thy puniſhment!

[Florimond *runs off.*

As Florimond *runs off,* Elfina *comes forward.*

Ha!—Fear not, my Emmeline! It is a friendly pow'r, familiar to my ſight.

Emm. What! is ſhe known to you?—My friend! my guide!

Edg. And mine!— [*Both run and kneel to her.*

Elf. Riſe both, both bleſt!——

Emm. Forgive my diffidence—When my heart accuſed you, I was overwhelmed with diſtreſs!—Your promiſe to come at my call was not fulfill'd.

Elf. I came not, that I might ſend you hither: [*pointing to* Edgar.] Your friendſhip was the parent of your love.

Edg. I too have need of your forgiveneſs; pardon my diſtruſt.

Elf. Say no more—your fathers now
Ought to hear your mutual vow;
Both the royal preſence grace,
Heroes both of Britiſh race!
Go, your duties there preſent;
I will anſwer for th' event.
Long may virtue guard your breaſt!
Joy ſhall then be long your gueſt.

[*The* Fairy *diſappears.*

Edg. She's gone! the kind propitious ſpright, that has

has led us, hoodwink'd, to the happineſs which, ſeeing, we had miſs'd.

Emm. Let us then haſte to follow her laſt advice; for I can truſt her now.

'*A* Fairy *behind the ſcenes.*

'Edgar, Edgar, Edgar?

'*Emm.* Hark! What voice?

'*Edg.* Perhaps ſome other kind and inviſible being—'There's muſic too—— [*An overture to a ſong.*

'*Emm.* It comes, another tiny ſpright——It cannot 'mean us ill——It beckons you——

'RECITATIVE.

'*Fairy.* Hear me, Edgar; hear, and truſt!
'Still be kind, and ſtill be juſt:
'Truth and fondneſs that endure,
'Love from jealouſy ſecure.

'AIR.

'Take and keep the fated fair,
'Born to give ſupreme delight;
'Make her ever all thy care,
'And ſecure thy envied right.
'Claſp her to thy beating breaſt,
'Round her lock thy faithful arms;
'Theſe will guard her virtue beſt,
'Theſe will beſt ſecure her charms.

'[*The* Fairy *diſappears.*'

Edg. Come then, my fair, whom fate my love ordains,
By whom kind heav'n o'erpays my fears and pains!
Chos'n as thou art for graces of the mind,
Ere gold could influence, or deſire could blind;
Whoſe charms, unſought, unknown, are friendſhip's dow'r;
Whoſe love on reaſon founds its laſting pow'r.
O! might each pair thus work what fate intends,
And none be lovers but who firſt were friends!

EPI-

EPILOGUE

Written by Mr GARRICK.

Spoken by Mrs YATES.

OLD times, old fashions, and the Fairies, gone;
Let us return, good folks, to sixty-one—
To this blest time, ye Fair, of female glory,
When pleasures unforbidden lie before ye!
No sprites to fright you now, no guardian elves;
Your wise directors are—your own dear selves—
And every fair one feels, from old to young,
While these your guides—you never can do wrong.
Weak were the sex of yore—their pleasures few—
How much more wise, more spirited are You?
Would any Lady Jane, or Lady Mary,
Ere they did this or that, consult a Fairy?
Would they permit this saucy pigmy crew,
For each small slip, to pinch them black and blue?
Well may you shudder—for, with all your charms,
Were this the case—good heav'n, what necks and arms!
Thus did they serve our grandames heretofore—
The very thought must make us moderns sore!
Did their poor hearts for cards or dancing beat,
These elves rais'd blisters on their hands and feet:
Tho' Loo the game, and fiddles play'd most sweetly—
They could not squeeze dear Pam, nor foot Moll Peatly.
Were wives with husbands but a little wilful,
Were they at that same Loo a little skilful;
Did they with pretty fellows laugh or sport—
Wear ruffs too small, or petticoats too short:
Did they, no matter how, disturb their cloaths;
Or, over-lilied, add a little rose!
These spiteful Fairies rattled round their beds,
And put strange frightful nonsense in their heads!
Nay, while the husband snor'd and prudish aunt,
Had the fond wife but met the dear gallant—
Tho' lock'd the door, and all as still as night—
Pop thro' the key-hole whips the Fairy sprite,
Trips round the room—"My husband!" Madam cries—
"The devil! where!" the frighted beau replies—
Jumps thro' the window——she calls out in vain—
He, cur'd of love—and cool'd with drenching rain,
Swears——"Dem him if he'll e'er intrigue again!"
These were the tricks of old—But all allow,
No childish fears disturb our fair ones now.—
Ladies, for all this trifling, 'twould be best
To keep a little Fairy in your breast:
Not one that should with modern passions war;
But just to tweak you—when you go too far.

THE

THE RIVAL CANDIDATES.

IN TWO ACTS.

By the Rev. HENRY BATE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

	Drury-Lane.	*Edinburgh*, 1783.
Byron,	Mr Vernon.	Mr Tannet.
Sir Harry Muff.	Mr Dodd.	Mr La-Mash.
General Worry,	Mr Parsons.	Mr Moss.
Spy,	M. Weston.	Mr Johnson.
First Gardener,	Mr Banniſter.	
Under Gardener,	Mr Kear. Mr Fawcett.	

WOMEN.

Narciſſa,	Mrs Baddely,	Mrs Baddely.
Jenny,	Mrs Wrighten.	Mrs Sparks.

SCENE, *A Country Villa, &c.*

ACT I.

SCENE, *A Hall in General* WORRY*'s houſe, adorned with military trophies; through the folding doors of which, is ſeen a part of the garden.*

NARCISSA *and* JENNY.

JENNY.

INDEED, Ma'am, I don't like to go near him:—beſides, what the deuce ſhould he want with me?

Nar. Oh, ſome freſh complaints, I'll warrant you:—but I deſire you'd go.

Jen. Lud, Ma'am! he's ſuch an old ſuſpicious mortal, that

that I can do no good with him:—and 'tis a ſhame to throw away good reaſoning and fine ſentiment upon ſo unfeeling a——

Nar. Prithee, don't be trifling now, girl, but go to him, and let us know the worſt.

Jen. Well, to oblige you, Ma'am, I'll venture any thing. [*Exit* Jenny.

Narciſſa *alone.*

Why was I doom'd to envy the free-born villager?—or what do I derive from fortune or education, but reflections which render my confinement inſupportable.—The family-quarrel which ſeparates me from the man I love, and my father's unreaſonable ſuſpicions, lie heavy on my ſpirits:—deny'd even to breathe that pure air, which nature deſigned as a common bleſſing to all her creatures!—Surely the time will come when I ſhall regain my liberty, and my Byron have an opportunity of reſuming the tender ſubject of his paſſion, ſo cruelly cut off in its infancy.

AIR I.

Soft Fancy, thou truant to me,
My ſummons oh quickly obey!
Neglected by Byron and thee,
How heavily paſſes the day!
Thy charms I've miſtaken for Love's,
So artfully doſt thou beguile;
Thy magic enlivens the groves,
When he has forgotten to ſmile!

Enter Jenny *haſtily.*

Jen. Oh dear, Ma'am!—charming news, Ma'am!

Nar. Thou art a mad girl:—but what is the cauſe of this tranſport?

Jen. Lud, Ma'am! as I hope to live and breathe, your papa is going down to the borough to vote for his friend Mr Indigo the Nabob, and his nephew Sir Harry Muff, the ſweet ſpark that lines his cloaths with fur in the dog-days—and your lover that is to be—

Nar. My lover that is to be!—But prithee, go on—

Jen. And ſo, Ma'am, he has given us leave to divert ourſelves in the plantations till he returns:—he

ſent

ſent Spy in ſearch of you, to tell you of it before he ſaw me.

Nar. Indeed!

Jen. Yes, indeed and indeed, Ma'am—I wiſh I could let ſomebody know of it, that—he might pay us a viſit.

Nar. That's impoſſible, Jenny.—But ſoft!——here comes my father's cabinet-counſellor.

Enter Spy.

Nar.——Well, Sir, what's your buſineſs?

Spy. Buſineſs, Ma'am!—no great matter of buſineſs, truly; only his worſhip ordered me to tell you, that he was going to the election at Tipplewell; and ſo, if you thought fit, you and Mrs Jenny might recreate yourſelves in the pleaſure-grounds (as 'tis a fine day) till he returns.

Jen. There's kindneſs for you, Madam!

Spy. But he charg'd me to tell you, he'd have no lolling out of the ſummer-houſe window that looks to the high-road;—nor no ſinging, for fear you ſhould ſcar the wild ducks that are hatching in the iſland;—nor no——

Jen.——opening our eyes, I ſuppoſe, for fear we ſhould ſee any thing in the ſhape of a man!—now your bolt's ſhot!—Your maſter's very kind, truly: after depriving us of every enjoyment for three months paſt, he now ſets a diſh before us, and generouſly tells us we muſt not taſte of it.

Spy. Why you know, Mrs Jenny, I would refuſe you nothing; not even if you were to take a liking to me myſelf.

Jen. That would be a fine diſh indeed!

Nar. Come, come, no more of this; you may tell your maſter, I think myſelf obliged to him, even for this limited indulgence:—what does the fellow ſtand ſo like a ſtatue for?

Spy. I only waits to let you in, that's all.

Nar. You may ſave yourſelf that trouble, by giving the keys to my maid.

Jen. Come give them to me, Sir—

Spy.—But axing your pardon, Miſs Narciſſa, that's not the caſe neither; I was ordered to lock the garden-doors after you, and carry the keys back to your papa.

Nar.

Nar. Lock us in! for what?

Jen. Ay, for what, Sir?

Spy. For—for—oh!———only for fear the turkeys ſhould get in and eat up all the ſtrawberries, that's all.

Nor. I underſtand my father's cruel ſuſpicions: but thou haſt more delicacy than thy maſter; go open the gates. [*Exit* Spy.

Jen. Now, Ma'am!—if Mr Byron be the gentleman I take him for, he'll find it out ſome how or other that the old gentleman has left his watch, and be here in the twinkling of an eye.——

Nar. Ah Jenny! 'tis three long weeks—

Jen. So it is, Ma'am, ſince he blew you the laſt kiſs from the orchard-wall, by moon-light:—I'm ſure it almoſt melted my heart, it was ſent up with ſuch a deep ſigh.—Poor young gentleman!—I wiſh I was not of ſo tender a conſtitution myſelf in theſe caſes.

Nar. Heyday!—why, I ſhall look upon thee as my rival preſently:—Well, I muſt confeſs, girl, that Byron finds in thee a powerful advocate, and I a faithful confidante: I hope we ſhall be enabled to reward thy fidelity.

Jen. I ſhould be ſufficiently repaid, Ma'am, in ſeeing you happy.—Dear me! if he would but come now and offer himſelf a candidate here, we might have a ſnug little election of our own: he ſhould have my vote; and if I know any thing of eyes, I don't think but you'd immediately return him.

Nar. Faith, I cannot ſwear that I wou'd not, Jenny.

Jen. Lord, Ma'am, I can eaſily clamber over the pales if they do lock us in:—let me go then, and ſee if I can find him any where.

Nar. Heavens, girl, not for the world!—After ſuch an imprudent advance on my part, I need not wonder if a cool indifference ſhould ſucceed on his: for I have been told, Jenny, that men always ſet a value upon a conqueſt, in proportion to the eaſe or difficulty with which it is obtain'd.—And yet I long to ſee him!—But come, I am impatient to enjoy once more the beauties of nature: I am going into the drawing-room for my book; you'll find me at one of my favourite ſeats, where I really long to reſt myſelf. [*Exit* Nar.

Jenny, *alone.*

Poor young lady!—I wonder ſhe holds it out ſo long: no ſleep o' nights, and her little heart hurry ſcurry, hurry ſcurry, all day.—The deuce take the men, ſay I, for a pack of unfeeling numſkulls; they are all alike—wonderfully loving, when locks and bars are between; but if you give 'em a favourable opportunity, not one in ten of them has the brains to make uſe of it.

AIR II.

Fie! fie! ſilly man,
Your ſoft nonſenſe forego,
No heart you'll trepan
With your ſighing—heigho!
For that's not the way a fond damſel to woo.
A truce to your whining,
Your ſobbing, and pining:
But preſs her!
Careſs her!
The buſineſs is done, and ſhe'll ſoon buckle too.

[*Exit* Jenny.

Enter General Worry, *diſcovering* Jenny *as ſhe goes off.*

Gen. There's a baggage for you now! Zounds! if I had ſtole a march upon her a minute ſooner, I ſhould have catch'd 'em out!—Damme, if the life I now lead is not more perilous than when I was upon the coaſt of France, and expected a mine to be ſprung upon me every ſtep I advanced.—A fine bouncing girl, ſcribbling dying ſongs and love-letters from morning till night, and ſnivelling day after day for liberty, in order to run away with ſome ſcape-grace, who'll cut my throat to get in for my fortune;—and an Abigail, crafty enough to debauch the morals of a Lapland virgin!—'Tis too much for an invalid of ſixty-five!—But, upon ſecond thoughts, there can come no great harm on letting them out for a little while:—beſides, it will give Narciſſa a bloom againſt I bring Sir Harry home with me.——

[*Enter* Spy, *whiſtling, and leading a large maſtiff.*

Spy. Here, Dragon! Dragon!

Gen. Well, Spy!—what, have you let 'em out?

Spy. Yes, your honour's worſhip, I let 'em looſe.—It would have done your heart good to ſee 'em: they jump'd

and

and friſk'd about, for all the world, like rabbits in a warren.

Gen. But did you double-lock all the gates?

Spy. Yes, your honour: and I've unmuzzled Dragon, and am going to let him looſe in the back yard.

Gen. Well, that's right; but ſuppoſe they ſhould clamber over the pales, and elope? I've heard of ſuch things in my time!

Spy. So have I; but they muſt ſcramble deucedly if they do:—indeed, for the matter of that, Mrs Jenny has a fine ſtride with her.

Gen. Are you ſure now, Spy, that you've ſeen no ſuſpicious kind of body lurking about the grounds this week paſt.

Spy. Not a ſoul, indeed, your honour; nor can I track any thing but the foot of farmer Brown's Tom cat, that comes caterwauling after Miſs Narciſſa's Tabby; and, if I catch him, I fancy I ſhall ſtop his rambles.

Gen. Well then, all's well.—But I'm waſting time here—I'll ſet out—Nothing ſhould have tempted me from home, but the fear of affronting my old friend Indigo.—Sir Harry will have a fine eſtate, in a ring-fence cloſe to mine,—he's worth a little powder.—— Come, Spy, you and Dragon to your poſts:—you muſt have an hawk's eye upon 'em;—and be ſure you don't tipple upon guard:—behave like a ſoldier to-day, and I'll give you leave to get drunk to-morrow by day-break.

Spy. Thank your honour, I'll take you at your word. [*Going, returns.*] Your worſhip [*pointing to Dragon*] we are a pair of ſtaunch friends or deadly enemies.

[*Exit with* Dragon.

Gen.—Now I recollect, there is certainly a conſpiracy againſt me; for I traced a man's foot upon the tulip-bed, a full inch longer than Spy's or any of the gardeners.—If I find her out, I don't know what I ſhall do in my paſſion!—perhaps take a ſecond rib, and get a ſon and heir to diſinherit her!

AIR III.

What new curſes ſpring up,
To repleniſh man's cup,
Tho' heaven in pity has borrowed his wife!

His daughter will grieve him,
With plots to deceive him:
But mine!—oh, I'll match her
The firſt time I catch her,
Attempt, a young jade, to embitter my life! [*Exit.*

Narciſſa *diſcovered on a garden-ſeat, reading:*—Jenny *entering haſtily to her with a bird.*

Jen. La, Ma'am!—I have caught the ſweeteſt little linnet in the green-houſe that ever you ſaw in all your born days:—how its little heart goes pit-a-pat!—only look at it, Ma'am.

Nar. Depriv'd of liberty myſelf, I cannot behold the pretty captive without emotion.—Prithee, let it go.

Jen. But, perhaps, we may never catch it again, Ma'am; and I want to hang it up as a companion to my little bullfinch.

Nar. The generous find more true delight in reſtoring their priſoners to freedom, than in all the advantages they derive from their captivity.—Pretty ſportive creatures! though we envy them their liberty, never let it be ſaid that we invade the ſmalleſt of their little privileges.

[*While the ſymphony is playing,* Jenny *releaſes the bird.*

AIR IV.

Love unfetter'd is a bleſſing
Nature's commoners enjoy;
Source of raptures paſt expreſſing,
Which no tyrant laws deſtroy.
Come, ye ſongſters! wing around me,
Tell me all ye know of love:
Watchful of your young you've found me;—
—Hark! they carol through the grove,
[Love unfetter'd, &c. DA CAPO.

Jen. Ay, Ma'am!—and I'd be as free as the lark myſelf, if I had the fortune that you'll have, and not be mew'd up any longer.

Nar. But there's ſuch a thing as reputation, Jenny;—and my father never fails to tell me 'tis to be preſerved but by prudence and philoſophy.

Jen. Philoſophy! what the deuce does he mean by that?

Nar.

Nar. That I ſhould ſubdue all my feelings, I ſuppoſe in compliment to his.

Jen. Is that his philoſophy?—Oh never think of it, Ma'am, 'till you can think of nothing elſe.——I dare ſwear, your papa never thought any thing about it till he found himſelf a philoſopher againſt his will.

A I R V.

Since his worſhip forſooth,
Having loſt his ſweet tooth,
Forbids you Love's feaſt
Which no more he can taſte,
Be advis'd, and he'll find you a tartar!
Talk of lovers to vex him;
Intrigue to perplex him.—
What! give nature the lie?
By my ſtars would not I,
Though I dy'd the next moment her martyr.

Nar. There's ſomething of reaſon in that girl;—or rather, there's ſomething in it, I believe, that flatters my own inclinations.—Be that as it may.—methinks, if Byron were preſent, I ſhould not heſitate to fly with him any where.

Jen. Lud, Ma'am! if you could but behold yourſelf this moment, you'd ſee the charming difference between a deſpairing damſel and one who loves with ſpirit:—for my part, I always think it time enough for a woman to deſpair when you may count her age by her wrinkles.

Nar. Thy pleaſantry, girl, generally carries conſolation along with it.—Well! though I cannot but ſometimes lament his abſence, yet I receive comfort from thy counſel, which tells me I ſhall one day or other ſee a reverſe of fortune.—Oh! how tranſporting the idea, Jenny!

A I R VI.

Thus the midnight-tempeſt raging
Strikes the ſailor with diſmay;
Furious winds and waves engaging,
Baniſh every hope of day!
But at dawn, their wrath ſubſiding,
Ocean wears a tranquil face;
Joy, through every current gliding
Calms his boſom into peace.

Jen. Huſh! huſh!—As I hope to be married, yonder's that arch-mongrel Spy upon the watch behind the mulberry-tree there;——and now he's coming this way. ——What if I could prevail upon him to go down to the election, and make me deputy-turnkey.

Nar. That's impoſſible; he gets too much by watching us, to give up his poſt for nothing.

Jen. Do you call love nothing?—Conſider what you feel yourſelf, Madam, and then think of poor Spy's ſufferings.—Ha, ha, ha!—He's dying for me; and ſo if he won't betray every body elſe to obey me, he ſhall dangle upon that willow before I give him a ſingle grain of hope.—However, take your book, and go reſt yourſelf in your favourite bower near the fountain, while I try the power of my charms.—He muſt give up his maſter or me: ſo don't fear our ſucceſs.

Nar. Proſper thee, my faithful girl! [*Exit* Nar.

Enter Spy.

Spy. Your ſervant, Madam Jenny:—'tis a bleſſed fine day, and you're all alone, I ſee.—I am with you indeed, —but then I'm nobody, Mrs Jenny, unleſs you'd ſmile upon me.

Jen. Smile upon you, Mr Spy?—you are nobody indeed!—Can an Engliſhwoman, and a friend to liberty and the rights of the conſtitution, ſmile upon a creature——

Spy. Creature!—am I a creature, Mrs Jenny?—why you make me as bad as Dragon.

Jen. You are worſe, Mr Spy: he's a dumb creature, and knows no better;—but you can talk, and talk finely, Mr Spy.

Spy. Thank you for that, Mrs Jenny:—to be ſure, I can talk a little when I am half-cock'd.

Jen. Fie for ſhame! then, Mr Spy!—Fie for ſhame! —Can a freeborn woman like myſelf, who would give up my life, nay more—perhaps my honour, for my country—

Spy. That is noble indeed!

Jen. —Shall I ſmile upon a creature, who, whilſt his country's rights are in danger at the election of Tipplewell, can meanly and inglorioufly ſtay at home to watch the motions of two innocent young ladies, when he ſhou'd be

be huzzaing, drinking, and breaking windows, for liberty and property?—

Spy. Indeed and so I ſhould—How her fine ſpeeches melt a body!

Jen. O fie for ſhame, Mr Spy!—never aſk for my ſmiles. My ſmiles, my hand, and my heart, ſhall be given to a man only, and an Engliſhman.

Spy. I am both a man and an Engliſhman:—but what ſignifies all that, when I have no money in my pocket?—If I had but one piece of ſilver to prime me with a little, no man ſhould ſtand firmer by you and his country than little Spy would.

Jen. You ſhan't want for that then, tho' 'tis the only companion to my ſilver thimble:—here, Mr Spy.

[*Gives him money.*

Spy. Now one little roguiſh ſmile, that I'd give a thouſand of theſe for—and the keys are your own.

Jen. Deareſt Mr Spy [*curteſying and ſmiling.*] I thank you!

Spy. Had they been the keys of the ſtrong-beer cellar, you ſhould have had 'em!—Thus I ſurrender up the garriſon for the preſent, [*giving her the keys.*] And now to protect the laws, liberties, and property of Old England. [*Going, returns.*]—Perhaps, Mrs Jenny, I may return bold enough to intreat another favour,—may I hope?

Jen. A patriot may hope—never to figh in vain!

Spy. That's noble again!—I'll only ſtep and mount my garters, and return in an inſtant;—you ſhall let me out at the back gate, and I'll whiſk down to the borough as quick as a nine-pounder.

That—for my maſter!—By your ſmiles I'm bleſt;
Ale! love! and liberty! now fire my breaſt.

[*Exit* Spy.

Jenny, *laughing.*

Ha, ha, ha! there's a pretty fool now!—If the fate of a kingdom had depended upon it, the gudgeon would have bit juſt the ſame. Let ſhort-ſighted politicians ſay what they will about the power of money, a little well-diſſembled love will go farther, take my word for it.

[*Exit* Jenny.

SCENE, *A perſpective view of the General's park; on an oak-*

oak-tree near the paling of which is the usual inscription of—Men-traps and spring-guns, &c.

Enter Byron.

By this time the old buck is lost in the general uproar of an election—What a lucky dog was I to catch a glimpse of him as he pass'd along the road!—Let him choose whom he pleases —I am happy that I refus'd the solicitations of my friends, as my success would but have increased his resentment.—Give me, kind Fortune, but thy voice in Love's soft election, and I care not who are the representatives of a tumultuous borough!—But here's the blest retreat of my Narcissa.

AIR VII.

How oft through this responsive grove
Has softest Echo told my tale!
Whene'er she caught my notes of love,
She gently bore them down the vale!
The scene renew'd, my wakeful breast
Now joyful beats to love's alarms;
Ye powers who pity the distrest,
Transport me to Narcissa's arms!

——Heyday!—[*discovering the inscription.*]—What new bugbear have we here?—"Men-traps and spring-"guns set in these grounds day and night."——Well done, General!—Indeed you plann'd things a little better last war, or we should not have heard so much of your exploits.—Ha, ha, ha!——Such a device might secure your ducks and geese, but not the game I'm in pursuit of, I assure you:—so, with my cousin Ranger—Up I go!—up I go!—[*getting upon the pales.*]—There—now if the Cyprian deity has not taken care to draw all the charges of his spring-guns, and blunt the teeth of his steel-traps, I'm mistaken in my goddess!—So love and fortune go with me. [*Jumps over.*

ACT II.

JENNY *alone.*

I KNEW I could coax him to make a fool of himself, and give me the keys:—Hark! did not I hear something? No; I believe it was only the noise of the cascade;

cade: but it put my heart into my mouth!—Egad, if Miſs Narciſſa was to be catch'd ſleeping—and the poor thing takes a very ſound nap—there would be a fine ſpot of work; but I believe there's no great danger, for the gardeners can't be come back from the election yet:—Well, I'll e'en take a run acroſs the green, and ſee if I can ſpy him for her.—Pretty creatures, I ſhould like to bring them together!—and for all ſhe's ſo ſly, and looks ſo demure, my word for it ſhe'll have no objection.—If all women were like me, they'd cut the matter very ſhort; for my tongue and my heart always go together.

AIR VIII.

Fine ladies may tell us
They hate pretty fellows,
Deſpiſe little Cupid—his quiver and dart;
But when love's only by,
Not a prude will deny,
That man tho' a tyrant's the lord of her heart.
So bewitching a creature!
So noble each feature!
My boſom commands me to take his dear part:
Then how can I conceal
What my eyes will reveal?—
That he muſt, and he will be—the lord of my heart.

Byron *diſcovered in an attitude of ſurpriſe, beholding* Narciſſa *aſleep in a jeſſamine bower.*

Byr. ——Surely my eyes deceive me!—or is it ſome ſleeping Naiad of the neighbouring floods?—No; 'tis her! 'tis my Narciſſa's heavenly form, harmonious form'd by nature's matchleſs hand!

AIR IX.

My boſom's on fire!
It throbs with deſire!
Say whither, ye gods, ſhall I fly?
Love preſſes my ſtay;
But ſhould I obey,
To my paſſions a victim I die.

[*Going, returns.*

———But ſtay:—thus will I obey the dictates of honour as well as love. Thanks to love and the deſcriptive author of the Seaſons. [*Takes a card from his pocket,*

ket, and writes.]——There:——in atonement for the innocent trefpafs on thy foft repofe, I will become thy watchful guardian, and protect thee from the eye of any rude obferver.—But foft! my eager tranfport has difturb'd her:—fhe wakes—and fee, fhe fhrinks even at nature's voice;—alarm'd, and blufhing at the doubtful breeze! I muft conceal myfelf.

[*He retires behind a tree.*

Narciffa, *awaking.*

Nar. ———Methought I heard fome human voice! Thefe fleeplefs eyes, wearied with perpetual watchings, betrayed me into flumber:—Sure no eye profane peep'd thro' yon clofe recefs, and in my unguarded moments ——Ah! what's here? [*Seeing the card.*]——Then I'm undone. [*Comes forward and reads.*]

—— —— "Sleep on my fair,
"Yet unbeheld, fave by the facred eye
"Of faithful love: I go to guard thy haunt,
"To keep from thy recefs each vagrant foot,
"And each licentious eye."

[*After a pauſe of wonder*]——It is—it is my Byron's well-known hand!—Then why thefe mixt emotions hard to be defcrib'd? why heaves my labouring breaft, except to bid eternal welcome to its long-lov'd lord?—No, my Byron, no! thy virtuous merit fhall go no longer unrewarded.—But where is he?—fled?—Affift me then, love's favourite mufe, that thus expreffing my own feelings, I may alleviate the feverity of his.——

[*She writes and fings.*

A I R X.

Dear youth, my fond heart you have won,
'Tis a truth that it cannot deny;
Love's fetters have made us but one,
Then tell me—ah! why didft thou fly?
My hand fhall thy honour repay,
As witnefs this amorous figh!
So believe me, when hither you ftray,
You need not——
[Byron *difcovering himfelf, fings*—I never will fly!

Nar. [*dropping the card.*] Heavens defend me!
Byr. Forgive me, lovely maid, for thus breaking in upon

upon thoſe angelic ſtrains:—if I have miſtaken their ſweet harmonious burden, I am ſufficiently puniſhed for my preſumption.

Nar. [*beholding him affectionately.*] My faithful Byron!—why ſhould my tongue deny what my looks, ſighs, and every action of my life, proclaim?—In the infancy of affection, hypocriſy may be merit; but when love is aſſured of love, concealment would be folly, and prudery a crime.

A I R XI.

Nar. —Here I plight a maiden's vow!—
Byr. —By thy beauteous ſelf I ſwear!—
Nar. Thou ſhalt be my guardian now!
Byr. Thou ſhalt be my only care!

D U E T.

Here we plight, &c.—

Enter Jenny *haſtily.*

Jen. Oh, ſtop your piping!—Who the deuce would have thought of ſeeing you here?—[*To* Byron.]—Your papa, Ma'am, is this moment return'd, and Sir Harry Muff along with him; they'll be in at the gate in the twinkling of an eye.

Nar. Oh we are undone then; what ſhall we do?

Byr. How, for your ſake, ſhall I avoid them?

Jen. Oh, dear Ma'am, I have it!—run both of you with me into the temple, and I'll bolt you in ſafe enough. —I've been forced to play at bo-peep with him there a hundred and a hundred times before now myſelf——In, in, in—— [*Exeunt to the temple.*

Gen. Worry, *and Sir* Harry Muff.

Sir Har. No, Sir;—theſe things never give a moment's uneaſineſs to a man of the world, *ſur mon honneur.*

Gen. No?—What the devil, to be kick'd out of your birthright by an impudent young ſcoundrel, the ſecond ſon of an obſtinate fool of a baronet, and not take fire at it? You'd make a damn'd fine ſoldier!———

Sir Har. We take fire at nothing, Gen. Worry. You fine gentlemen of the laſt century wore yourſelves out with your gun-powder paſſions before you were men.—For example, your fire has burnt you to the bone, Gene-

ral;

ral; ſo that you are in reality nothing but a collection of tinder and touchwood.

Gen. Damme, you've not a ſingle ſpark of fire in your whole compoſition.

Sir Har. Paſſion of any kind agitates the human frame moſt horribly; and therefore we of the high *ton* have no paſſions at all; indeed our lives may be properly ſtyled a kind of agreeable vegetation.

Gen. Agreeable vegetation!——what a devil of a huſband will this fellow make? [*Aſide.*

Sir Har. But I'm all agog for a ſight of your delicious daughter—they tell me ſhe's a fine *cretur;* is ſhe any thing like Maria?— [*Taking off his hat.*

Gen. What the devil has he got there?—A picture in his hat inſtead of a button.

Sir Har. —A-propos, has Narciſſa good teeth?

Gen. What the devil will he aſk me next? [*Aſide.*] I'll anſwer for't, ſhe'll do your table no diſcredit, if that's all.—But, zounds——

Sir Har. Table! why, my dear General, we do not underſtand each other:—Do you ſeriouſly imagine, that teeth, in this enlightened age, like your green-handled knives and forks, are mechanically conſtructed for eating?

Gen. Why, what the devil would you have 'em conſtructed for?

Sir Har. Quel ſauvage! [*Aſide.*] Why, General, if you muſt know, the teeth belonging to perſons of faſhion are tortur'd into beauteous ſemi-circles, and poliſh'd thrice a-day for the admiration of the beholders.

Gen. And that's the reaſon, I ſuppoſe, why our fine gentlemen are always upon the broad grin;——a ſet of ſlop-dawdle puppies!

Sir Har. Why, do you really think, General, that I ſhould cut ſo capital a figure in a faſhionable grin, if I had delv'd all my days in tough Old Engliſh roaſt beef?

Gen. I tell you, I neither know nor care:—but one thing, I fancy, you'll find, that my daughter will not eaſily be prevail'd upon to give up her notions of ſubſtantials, in compliment to your delicate appetite.

Sir Har. Oh leave that to me, General!—I ſhall ſoon make a convert of her; or why have I ſcaled the lofty

Alps, and swept the aromatic vales of blest Italia:—if Narcissa is fortunate enough to have a gusto for poetry and music, I shall make a rapid conquest.

Gen. Damn your music and poetry! for both of you together would turn Worry-Hall into a mad-house. [*Aside.*

Sir. Har. You must know, General, that the muses, all nine, smil'd upon my birth, and Apollo stood god-father to me by proxy.

Gen. Damme, but I believe he's touch'd! [*Aside.*

Sir Har. I have written a song that has made a little noise in the polite world;—and tack'd the crotchets to it myself.

Gen. His crotchets!——Oh he's past recovery. [*Aside.*

Sir Har. —Nay, the *sçavoire vivre*, of which I've the honour to be a member, forc'd their annual prize upon me for the composition.—You must know, we were rallied a little upon a certain occasion by the female wits of the *coterie:* so you may guess who was fix'd upon for our literary champion. [*Affectedly.*] You shall have it, though it will lose much of its effect from the pressure of an English atmosphere upon the delicate organs of my pipe.

Gen. [*walking about hastily.*] Mad as a March hare.

AIR XII.

Ladies, in vain
Why entertain
Hopes to bewitch us with love's artful wiles?
Cease to do so,
Since you all know,
We have his patent for dimples and smiles.
Gentler beaux that pow'r possessing,
Yield no more to your alarms;
Each his scented self caressing,
Quite enamour'd with his charms!
Pretty play-things, all adieu!
Now dissolve in am'rous sighs;
We a softer clime pursue,
Froze too long beneath your eyes. *Da Capo.*

Gen. ——Psha! damn your singing, it may be very

fine, but I'm not in a humour to relish it:—I'm touch'd to the quick at being flung by the Byrons; and yet you seem to mind it no more than the loss of a match of billiards.

Sir Har. My dear General, be compos'd as I am;—and don't fret yourself in this absurd manner.——

Gen. I won't be compos'd;—damme, but I will fret myself.—Indeed, if I was of your cucumber-like disposition, you might expect to find me as fine a piece of still life, agreeable vegetation, as yourself; but—no, no, no, Sir!—

Sir Har. Now, indeed, General, I mean to resent their treatment; and to show you I'm in earnest, I'll lodge a petition against them, by this light!

Gen. Ay; why there you are right, for your grounds are good enough.—

Sir Har. 'Pon honour, General, you shall be commanding officer for the day.

Gen. If that's the case, I have a plan.—But I'm so tir'd.—Walk with me into the temple, and I'll tell it to you.—I am sure we shall discover some underhand dealings of this young rascal's at the bottom, and don't doubt of bringing it home to him.—[*Finding the doors fast.*] What the devil's the meaning of this?—why, the door's fasten'd within.——[*Listens at the key-hole.*]—Zounds! here are some villains concealed with a design to rob the house; listen, Sir Harry. [*Sir Harry puts his ear to the door.*] Here, Robin, Matthew, Jerry!—why, where the devil are these scoundrels got to?

Sir Har. Why really, General, I do hear a kind of confederate buz.— [*Enter* Robin.

Rob. What's your honour's will?

Gen. Here, break open the door directly:——some thieves have hid themselves within-side!——

Rob. Have they, your worship?—then we'll soon have them out.——Come along, my boys. [*Enter* Mat. *and* Jerry.]—Thieves in our garden! we'll let them know that nobody shall encroach upon our privileges, without a good ducking, however.—

[*They burst open the door with their spades, and discover* Byron:—*the gardeners laugh.*

Gen. —Hell and the devil! what have we got here?

—Your

—Your ſervant, Mr Byron:—I give you joy of your election, Sir!—[*Sneeringly.*]—How compos'd the raſcal ſtands!—what, I ſuppoſe, you are a ſtick of agreeable vegetation too?

Sir Har. This is rather too much, damme! upon his return for one borough, to be canvaſſing for another.—Don't you ſmoke a petticoat, General?

[*The* General *looking inquiſitively.*

Byr. Gentlemen, my preſent ſituation prevents me from returning your raillery.—

Gen. Fire and ſmoke! my daughter's maid Jenny!—why, huſſy, how dare you be lock'd up with ſuch a rake as this.

Jen. La, Sir! the gentleman only aſk'd to ſee the temple, and ſo I thought there was no harm in ſhowing it him.

Sir Har. Comingly kind, by all that's plump and lovely!

Gen. How the devil did he get in when the gates were all lock'd?—But 'tis a lie, huſſy, he came caterwauling after you. But get about your buſineſs, you jade! you ſhan't ſtay in my houſe another minute!—

Byr. Nay then, Sir, I hope it will not offend you, ſince it can no longer be concealed, if I produce the moſt delicate teſtimony of our innocence.—

[*Stepping back, diſcovers* Narciſſa.

Sir Har. Doubtleſs, by this light!

Gen. Narciſſa! Traitor! deliver up my daughter, whom you have ſeduced, that I may puniſh her as ſhe deſerves!

Byr. Retire, Narciſſa, into the citadel, I beſeech you, and I'll defend you to the laſt.

Nar. I beg you'll give me up, your danger overpowers me. [*To* Byron.

Jen. Dear Ma'am, you are only to reward the conqueror; you have nothing to do with the battle:—beſides, Mr Muff will take care there ſhan't be much blood ſpilt.—

Gen. Matchleſs impudence!—What! laugh'd at into the bargain!—Seize him, Robin, and drag him to the canal.—Raſcals, why don't you obey my orders?

Rob. What! duck young Master Byron?—Not I, I love him too well.—

Other Gardeners. And so do I.—

Gen. Villains, you are my slaves; and I'll make you do what I command you:—lay hold on him, I say.

A I R XIII.

Rob. He's the pride of the borough, God bless him say I;
I've poll'd for his honour, and will till I die.
In vain then you rave,
I'll not be your slave,
Tho' I'm a poor fellow of humble degree,
Which of you then will bear it?
Will you?
———*Mat.* No, I swear it:
Or you? *Jer.* No, I swear it:
There is but one way then to set us all free:
We'll none of us bear it.
Will you?—*Both*—No, I swear it:
Nor *Bob*, I declare it.
This, this is the way then; for now we are free.
[*Throw down their spades*, &c.

Byr. You must excuse me, Gen'ral, tho' I am under the necessity, even in this place, of defending your daughter from any violence on her inclinations.

Gen. Scoundrels! I'll be revenged! Oh! here comes Spy!—Fetch my double-barrel'd horse-pistols this instant. Why, the rascal's drunk! [*Enter* Spy.

Spy. Byron for ever! shoot who, him?——Lord love his heart—Byron for ever!—I tell you that won't do:—there's no flints:—I would not hurt a hair of his head.—Byron for ever!—[*Turning to Sir Harry.*]—So I think we wa'n't troubled to chair your fine gingerbread carcase:—damme, you know'd a trick worth two of that!

Sir Har. Filthy brute!

Gen. The devil has bewitch'd 'em all to conspire against me! Get out of my sight, villain, or I shall be the death of you.—

Spy. Oh! if that's all—I can punch it.—Byron for ever!—Tho' he don't want a second:—he's spunk:—he can manage e'm both—No Muffs and Indigo Nabobs—Byron for ever!— [*Exit reeling.*

Gen.

Gen. Powder and fury! I believe there's neither a brave nor an honeſt man left in the kingdom.—Look you, Sir Harry, win her and wear her.—What! I ſuppoſe, I muſt fight this fellow myſelf? [*Goes up to the door.*] But here he comes;—if he refuſes to ſurrender her, put him to death.

Sir Har. Well, if it muſt be ſo, it muſt; tho' 'pon my ſoul, I've no butchering ideas about me. [*Half draws.*] —Come, good Sir, don't put me to the fatigue of chaſtiſing you.

Byr. Sir Harry, you have more humanity.

Sir. Har. No, ſplit me if I have!—She's mine by deed of gift; if you diſpute that title, ſhe muſt be mine by force of arms.—

[*Draws, and puts himſelf in an attitude.*

Byr. Say you ſo?—come on then.—

[*Drawing a piſtol,* Sir Harry *ſprings back.*

Gen. Why, what the devil, are you afraid of the ſmell of powder? [*To* Sir Harry.

Sir Har. No, not in the leaſt, General, (*confuſedly*)—I am—I am—only diſconcerted a little for—for fear of the ladies;—you ſaw they retir'd diſorder'd: beſides, Sir, I'am not upon an equal footing with the aſſaſſin.

Byr. No more you were, when you valiantly drew upon a naked man:—however, Sir, not to alarm you with the ſuperiority of my weapon, thus I reſign it into your hands.

[Sir Harry *receives the piſtol, cocks it, and advances.*

Sir Har. Oh then the citadel's our own, General!

Byr. When you have won it, Sir.

[*Preſents a ſecond piſtol.*

Sir Har. [*retiring affrighted.*] Split me, but the ruffian has got another!

Gen. [*looking earneſtly at* Byron.] Damme, that's noble too! 'Tis almoſt a ſin to kill ſo fine a fellow;—but the calls of honour muſt be obey'd.—Come, you ſhall ſettle it like ſoldiers, however.—I little thought I ſhould ever ſee another ſhot fired.

[*Meaſures ten paces with his cane.*

Sir Har. My dear General, what are you about?

Gen. About?—Why, meaſuring the ground:—you

would not fight like a couple of foot-pads, with the muzzle of the piſtol in each other's mouth, would you? What the devil ails you now?

Sir Har. Dear General, your ear a moment, [*whiſpering*] my conſcience forbids me.

Gen. Conſcience! who the devil ever heard of a man's having conſcience, who had no heart!—However, Sir Harry, I ſee how the land lies.—You need give yourſelf no further concern about me or my family.—I am determin'd to have a brave man for my ſon-in law, tho' I croſs the ocean for him.

Byr. You need not put yourſelf to that inconveniency, Sir, when you behold in me one who is ready to lay down his life in defence of your daughter's virtue and your honour.

Gen. Why, tho' my enemy—thou art a fine fellow, I own:—and if I could forget the family-grudge——

Byr. Believe me, Sir, I have lamented in ſecret the groundleſs animoſity that has ſo long ſubſiſted between you and my father, ſo fatal to the early overtures I made the lovely Narciſſa.

Gen. Zounds! but when I recollect—to be jockey'd by you out of the borough, and by ſuch underhand means!—

Byr. Why, Sir, you ſurpriſe me!—they have choſen that Gentleman, have they not?

[*Pointing to Sir Harry.*

Gen. No, Sir, they have not.—What, you don't know, I ſuppoſe, that they have return'd you?

Byr. Upon my honour, no, Sir:—I have been employ'd upon a much more agreeable ſervice:—and to convince you of it, as they have choſen me, contrary to my wiſhes, I am ready to reſign my ſeat in favour of any one you ſhall appoint.

Gen. No, you young dog;—you ſhan't do that neither:—I am a little cooler than I was:—that piece of ſtill life there has brought me to my ſenſes [*pointing to Sir Harry.*] I begin now to think, that the unanimous choice of a free body of people is too ſacred to be ſuperſeded by the will of any individual. Beſides, your courage has charm'd me.—Come, you young dog, you may releaſe your priſoners, they ſhall be upon their parole,

role till I paſs ſentence. [Byron *opens the door of the temple, and brings them a little forward.*] You look mighty cunning, Sir Harry, after loſing Tipplewell, and the richeſt heireſs in the county, through your delicate feelings.——Damn ſuch feelings, ſay I! you'll cut a pretty figure in the modern hiſtory of Maccaronyiſm.

Sir. Har. Why, good General, you don't know me yet.—I confeſs I have loſt a pair of pretty toys!——but with reſpect to your modern ſatire, a real fine gentleman is infinitely beyond its reach, I aſſure you:—ſo I ſhall laugh at the dinner-hunting tribe.

Gen. Why, where the devil did this fellow ſpring from?—[Byron, Jenny, *and* Narciſſa, *coming forward.*]—I believe the young rogue deals in magic with both of us—[*To* Narciſſa.]—Come hither, girl, don't tremble ſo:—I begin to think that I've held out too long with Sir Walter—and therefore I don't know how I can ſhow a heartier deſire of reconciliation, than by rewarding his ſon of merit, with my only daughter and fifty thouſand pounds.——What ſays Narciſſa?—but I need not aſk her.—

Nar. If I may diſcover my partiality for Mr Byron without offending you, Sir, I ſhould tell you, that I have every reaſon in the world to admire and eſteem him.

Gen. Come hither, then, both of you; as an earneſt of my approbation, there—I've joined your hands before the parſon; and may neither you nor I live to repent it!

Byr. This, Sir, is ſo generous, my life will be too ſhort to repay the obligation.

Sir Har. Demme, but I cut a pretty figure here truly!——Chous'd out of my own borough and a fine girl by the ſon of a fox-hunting baronet;—and laughed at by the old Jew of a father, for endeavouring to accommodate him.—Well, what's to be done?—Why, upon my arrival at Almack's, I muſt carry it off, for the preſent, by dint of bronze; tell 'em the girl was damn'd ugly, and that the other borough has loſt its charter.

Gen. Come, come, Sir Harry; every man's not born to be a giant-killer—[*ironically.*] If it be not beneath

the

the dignity of a fine gentleman to rejoice at the ſucceſs of a worthier man than himſelf, adjourn with us to Worry-hall.

Sir Har. Any thing for a frolic, General; for I'm in tip-top ſpirits.

Gen. All that now remains, is for me to endeavour to prevail upon Sir Walter to meet us, and conſent to make the little rogues happy:—for my own part, I am now fully convinced, that the tender affections were never implanted in the human breaſt to be call'd forth or ſuppreſſed by the caprice of an unfeeling parent.

VAUDEVILLE.

NARCISSA.

Roſy archer, come away!
Give your train a holiday;
Lay your bow and quiver by,
Ceaſe to wound,—and hither hie!

CHORUS.

Roſy archer, &c.

BYRON.

Hither bring the ſmiling graces,
And the loves with cherub faces;
Bid the valleys laugh and ſay,
"Love has made a holiday!"

CHORUS.

Hither bring, &c.

SIR HARRY.

Lips of coral! eyes ſo pretty!
Out of luck, foregad, was I:
Tho' I am chous'd, I'll join the ditty;—
Down, thou little riſing ſigh.
May love's tender prittle-prattle
Keep the day for ever bright,
And no jealous tittle-tattle
Mar the raptures of the night!

CHORUS.

May Love's tender, &c.

JENNY.

Gentlefolks, if you'll permit me,
I've a word or two to ſay,
Tho' perhaps it mayn't befit me,
On my lady's wedding-day.

Graveſt

Graveſt Don with eye of ferrit,
Though he practiſe all his art,
Cannot break a woman's ſpirit,
Till he's ſtrength to break her heart.

CHORUS.

Graveſt Don, &c.

COLONEL WORRY.

Brother grey-beards, ſhort's my ſtory,
Read your features in this glaſs;
Here's a convert now before ye
Metamorphos'd from an aſs:—
When a ſwain of merit woos her,
Make your girl a happy wife;
Nature bids you not refuſe her,
In the criſis of her life.

CHORUS.

When a ſwain of merit woos her,
Make your girl a happy wife;
Nature bids you not refuſe her,
In the criſis of her life!

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Written by the AUTHOR,

And Spoken by Mr WESTON, *entering with a large dog.*

OH, Lud! what authors have we now-a-days?
A farmer this!—ecod, or what you pleaſe:
He ſwears (tho' we've but juſt got thro' one ſweat-o)
He'll make us ſpeak an epilogue duetto.—
What ſay you, Dragon?—Why's your tail ſo low?—
Be not chop-fall'n—they can't damn you, you know;—
What, dumb, my comrade?—terrible diſaſter!
So I muſt puff for you and for your maſter?
Ye Gods, be kind!—No cat-call interference!
Believe Tom Weſton, 'tis his firſt appearance.—
You would not think it; but the rogue's ſo ſteady,
He's in the privy-council here already:
The Prompter gives him merit univerſal,
Becauſe—[*whiſtling*] his whiſtle calls him to rehearſal;
Beſides, he imitates no tragic brother,—
Who makes him pull down one bill—poſt another.
Tho' he's not ſleek, and has an hungry eye,
(A poet's dog is never fed too high),
Yet he is ſound, Sirs, and in good condition;
He has no whimſies—no indiſpoſition:
Whene'er in letters large the bills he graces,
You're ſure of ſeeing him—if you have places;
He'll top the bills, if to this text he ſticks;
A dog of parts—and have no puppy-tricks.——
Odzooks, I've loſt his buſineſs in his praiſe;
Oh!—here he's ſent to guard his maſter's bays.
A dragon once, they ſay, kept watch and ward,
Some curious golden fruit from thieves to guard.
So to protect the poet's fruit from riot,
Secure ſome guineas, and a better diet,
He's ſent this dragon, critics!—So be quiet.
Sharp then's the word, my ſlender-waiſted couſins,
He'll ſwallow macaronies by the dozens!
Growling, and ſnarling,—don't let this dog catch ye,
At all your tearing-work he'll over-match ye;
If by ill-humours you our bard wou'd puzzle,
I've nothing elſe to do—but ſlip the muzzle!
Tho' you're ſo high, [*to the galleries,*] you too he ſoon wou'd tame;
Dragon has wings, if I but ſhow him game.
But ſhou'd his maſter's ſing-ſong melt your ſoul,
He'll be as ſoft as—Signor Roſignol:
Will with harmonious howlings ſwell each note,
And bark ſweet muſic—"only from his throat."

THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE:

OR,

WHAT WE MUST ALL COME TO.

IN TWO ACTS.

By ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

DRAMATIC PERSONÆ.

MEN.

	Covent-Garden.	*Edinburgh*, 1782.	*Edinburgh*, 1783.
Sir Ch. Racket,	Mr Lewis.	Mr Ward.	Mr Ward.
Drugget,	Mr Quick.	Mr Hollingsworth.	Mr Johnson.
Lovelace,	Mr Booth.	Mr Tannet.	Mr Tannet.
Woodley,	Mr Young.	Mr Banks.	Mr Banks.

WOMEN.

Lady Racket,	Mrs Mattocks.	Mrs Bulkley.	Mrs Cornelys.
Mrs Drugget,	Mrs Pitt.	Mrs Charteris.	Mrs Charteris.
Nancy,	Miss Davis.	Mrs Tannet.	Mrs Tannet.
Dimity,	Mrs Green.	Mrs Kniveton.	Mrs Sparks.

A Servant, &c.

ACT I.

Enter WOODLEY *and* DIMITY.

DIMITY.

PO! po!——no such thing———I tell you, Mr Woodley, you are a mere novice in these affairs.

Wood. Nay, but listen to reason, Mrs Dimity——has not your master, Mr Drugget, invited me down to his country-seat, in order to give me his daughter Nancy in marriage; and with what pretence can he now break off?

Dim. What pretence!——you put a body out of all pa-

patience—But go on your own way, Sir; my advice is all loſt upon you.

Wood. You do me injuſtice, Mrs Dimity——your advice has governed my whole conduct———Have not I fixed an intereſt in the young lady's heart?

Dim. An intereſt in a fiddleſtick!——you ought to have made love to the father and mother—What, do you think the way to get a wife, at this time of day, is by ſpeaking fine things to the lady you have a fancy for?—That was the practice, indeed; but things are alter'd now—you muſt addreſs the old people, Sir, and never trouble your head about your miſtreſs—None of your letters, and verſes, and ſoft looks, and fine ſpeeches.—"Have compaſſion, thou angelic creature, on a poor "dying"—Pſha! ſtuff! nonſenſe! all out of faſhion,—Go your ways to the old curmudgeon; humour his whims—"I ſhall eſteem it an honour, Sir, to be allied "to a gentleman of your rank and taſte." "Upon my "word, he's a pretty young gentleman."—Then wheel about to the mother: "Your daughter, Ma'am, is the "very model of you, and I ſhall adore her for your "ſake." "Here, come hither, Nancy, take this "gentleman for better for worſe." "La, mama, I "can never conſent."—"I ſhould not have thought of "your conſent—the conſent of your relations is enough: "why, how now, huſſey!" So away you go to church, the knot is tied, an agreeable honey-moon follows, the charm is then diſſolv'd; you go to all the clubs in St James's Street; your lady goes to the Coterie; and in a little time you both go to the Doctor's Commons; and, if faults on both ſides prevent a divorce, you'll quarrel like contrary elements all the reſt of your lives: that's the way of the world now.

Wood But you know, my dear Dimity, the old couple have received every mark of attention from me.

Dim. Attention! to be ſure you did not fall aſleep in their company; but what then?—You ſhould have entered into their characters, play'd with their humours, and ſacrificed to their abſurdities.

Wood. But if my temper is too frank—

Dim. Frank, indeed! yes, you have been frank enough to ruin yourſelf.—Have not you to do with a rich old

ſhop-keeper, retired from buſineſs with an hundred thouſand pounds in his pocket, to enjoy the duſt of the London road, which he calls living in the country—and yet you muſt find fault with his ſituation!—What if he has made a ridiculous gimcrack of his houſe and gardens, you know his heart is ſet upon it; and could not you have commended his taſte? But you muſt be too frank! "Thoſe walks and alleys are too regular——thoſe evergreens ſhould not be cut into ſuch fantaſtic ſhapes."—And thus you adviſe a poor old mechanic, who delights in every thing that's monſtrous, to follow nature—Oh, you're likely to be a ſucceſsful lover!

Wood. But why ſhould I not ſave a father-in-law from being a laughing-ſtock?

Dim. Make him your father-in-law firſt.—

Wood. Why, he can't open his windows for the duſt—he ſtands all day looking through a pane of glaſs at the carts and ſtage-coaches as they paſs by; and he calls that living in the freſh air, and enjoying his own thoughts.

Dim. And could not you let him go on his own way? You have ruin'd yourſelf by talking ſenſe to him; and all your nonſenſe to the daughter won't make amends for it.——And then the mother; how have you play'd your cards in that quarter?—She wants a tinſel man of faſhion for her ſecond daughter.—"Don't you ſee (ſays ſhe) how happy my eldeſt girl is made by marrying Sir Charles Racket? She has been married three entire weeks, and not ſo much as one angry word has paſs'd between them.—Nancy ſhall have a man of quality too."

Wood. And yet I know Sir Charles Racket perfectly well.

Dim. Yes, ſo do I; and I know he'll make his lady wretched at laſt—But what then? You ſhould have humour'd the old folks:—you ſhould have been a talking empty fop to the good old lady, and to the old gentleman an admirer of his taſte in gardening. But you have loſt him—he is grown fond of this beau Lovelace, who is here in the houſe with him; the coxcomb ingratiates himſelf by flattery, and you're undone by frankneſs.

Wood. And yet, Dimity, I won't despair.

Dim. And yet you have reason to despair; a million of reasons——To-morrow is fix'd for the wedding-day; Sir Charles and his lady are to be here this very night—they are engag'd, indeed, at a great rout in town; but they take a bed here, notwithstanding.—The family is sitting up for them; Mr Drugget will keep you all up in the next room there till they arrive—and to-morrow the business is over—and yet you don't despair!—Hush!—hold your tongue; here comes Lovelace.—Step in, and I'll devise something, I warrant you. [*Exit* Woodley.] The old folks shall not have their own way—'tis enough to vex a body, to see an old father and mother marrying their daughter as they please, in spite of all I can do. [*Exit.*

Enter 'Drugget *and*' Lovelace.

'*Drug.* And so you like my house and gardens, Mr 'Lovelace.

'*Love.* Oh, perfectly, Sir; they gratify my taste of all 'things. One sees villas where nature reigns in a wild 'kind of simplicity; but then they have no appearance 'of art, no art at all.

'*Drug.* Very true, rightly distinguish'd:——now, 'mine is all art; no wild nature here; I did it all my-'self.

'*Love.* What! had you none of the great proficients 'in gardening to assist you?

'*Drug.* Lackaday! no——ha! ha! I understand 'these things—I love my garden. The front of my house, 'Mr Lovelace, is not that very pretty?

'*Love.* Elegant to a degree!

'*Drug.* Don't you like the sun-dial plac'd just by my 'dining-room windows?

'*Love.* A perfect beauty!

'*Drug.* I knew you'd like it—and the motto is so well 'adapted—*Tempus edax et index rerum.* And I know the 'meaning of it—Time eateth and discovereth all things '—ha! ha! pretty, Mr Lovelace!—I have seen people 'so stare at it as they pass by—ha, ha!

'*Love.* Why now, I don't believe there's a nobleman 'in the kingdom has such a thing.

'*Drug.* Oh no—they have got into a false taste. I

'bought

'bought that bit of ground the other side of the road—'and it looks very pretty—I made a duck-pond there, 'for the sake of the prospect.

'*Love.* Charmingly imagin'd!

'*Drug.* My leaden images are well—

'*Love.* They exceed ancient statuary.

'*Drug.* I love to be surpriz'd at the turning of a walk 'with an inanimate figure, that looks you full in the face, 'and can say nothing to you, while one is enjoying one's 'own thoughts——ha, ha!——Mr Lovelace, I'll point 'out a beauty to you—Just by the ha-ha at the end of 'my ground, there is a fine Dutch figure with a scythe 'in his hand and a pipe in his mouth——that's a jewel, 'Mr Lovelace.

'*Love.* That escap'd me: a thousand thanks for point-'ing it out—I observe you have two very fine yew-trees 'before the house.

'*Drug.* Lackaday, Sir! they look uncouth—I have 'a design about them—I intend—ha, ha, it will be very 'pretty, Mr Lovelace—I intend to have them cut into 'the shape of the two giants at Guildhall—ha, ha!

'*Love.* Exquisite!——why then they won't look like 'trees.

'*Drug.* Oh, no, no——not at all—I won't have any 'thing in my garden that looks like what it is—ha, ha.

'*Love.* Nobody understands these things like you, Mr 'Drugget.

'*Drug.* Lackaday! 'tis all my delight now—this is 'what I have been working for. I have a great improve-'ment to make still—I propose to have my evergreens cut 'into fortifications; and then I shall have the Moro 'castle, and the Havanna; and then near it shall be ships 'of myrtle, sailing upon seas of box to attack the town: 'won't that make my place look very rural, Mr Love-'lace?

'*Love.* Why, you have the most fertile invention, Mr 'Drugget.

'*Drug.* Ha! ha! this is what I have been working 'for. I love my garden—But I must beg your pardon for 'a few moments—I must step and speak with a famous 'nurseryman, who is come to offer me some choice 'things.——Do go and join the company, Mr Love-

'lace—my daughter Racket and Sir Charles will be here 'presently—I shan't go to bed till I see them—Ha,—ha! '—my place is prettily variegated——this is what I have 'been working for——I fin'd for sheriff to enjoy these 'things—ha, ha. [*Exit.*

'*Love.* Poor Mr Drugget! Mynheer Van Thunder-'tentrunk, in his little box at the side of a dike, has as 'much taste and elegance—However, if I can but car-'ry off his daughter, if I can but rob his garden of that 'flower—why then I shall say, "This is what I have 'been working for."

'*Enter* Dimity.'

Dim. Do lend us your assistance, Mr Lovelace——you're a sweet gentleman, and love a good-natur'd action.

Love. Why how now, what's the matter?

Dim. My master is going to cut the two yew-trees into the shape of two devils, I believe: and my poor mistress is breaking her heart for it.—Do, run and advise him against it—she's your friend; you know she is, Sir.

Love. Oh, if that's all—I'll make the matter easy directly.

Dim. My mistress will be for ever oblig'd to you; and you'll marry her daughter in the morning.

Lov. Oh, my rhetoric shall dissuade him.

Dim. And, Sir, put him against dealing with that nurseryman; Mrs Drugget hates him.

Love. Does she?

Dim. Mortally.

Love. Say no more, the business is done. [*Exit.*

Dim. If he says one word, old Drugget will never forgive him.—My brain was at its last shift; but if this plot takes—So, here comes our Nancy.

Enter Nancy.

Nan. Well, Dimity, what's to become of me?

Dim. My stars! what makes you up, Miss?——I thought you were gone to bed!

Nan. What should I go to bed for? only to tumble and toss, and fret, and be uneasy—they are going to marry me, and I am frighted out of my wits.

Dim. Why then, you're the only young lady with-

in

in fifty miles round that would be frighten'd at such a thing.

Nan. Ah! if they would let me chooſe for myſelf.

Dim. Don't you like Mr Lovelace?

Nan. My mama does, but I don't; I don't mind his being a man of faſhion, not I.

Dim. And, pray, can you do better than follow the faſhion?

Nan. Ah! I know there's a faſhion for new bonnets, and a faſhion for dreſſing the hair—but I never heard of a faſhion for the heart.

Dim. Why then, my dear, the heart moſtly follows the faſhion now.

Nan. Does it!——pray, who ſets the faſhion of the heart?

Dim. All the fine ladies in London, o'my conſcience.

Nan. And what's the laſt new faſhion, pray?

Dim. Why, to marry any fop that has a few deceitful agreeable appearances about him; ſomething of a pert phraſe, a good operator for the teeth, and tolerable taylor.

Nan. And do they marry without loving?

Dim. Oh! marrying for love has been a great while out of faſhion.

Nan. Why, then, I'll wait till that faſhion comes up again.

Dim. And then, Mr Lovelace, I reckon—

Nan. Pſha! I don't like him; he talks to me as if he was the moſt miſerable man in the world, and the confident thing looks ſo pleas'd with himſelf all the while.—I want to marry for love, and not for card-playing——I ſhould not be able to bear the life my ſiſter leads with Sir Charles Racket—and I'll forfeit my new cap if they don't quarrel ſoon.

Dim. Oh fie! no! they won't quarrel yet a while.——A quarrel in three weeks after marriage, would be ſomewhat of the quickeſt—By and by, we ſhall hear of their whims and their humours—Well, but if you don't like Mr Lovelace, what ſay you to Mr Woodley?

Nan. Ah!——I don't know what to ſay—but I do love him dearly, Dimity.

SONG.

'When first the dear youth passing by,
'Disclos'd his fair form to my sight,
'I gaz'd, but I could not tell why;
'My heart it went throb with delight.
'As nearer he drew, those sweet eyes
'Were with their dear meaning so bright,
'I trembled, and, lost in surprise,
'My heart it went throb with delight.
'When his lips their dear accents did try
'The return of my love to excite,
'I feign'd, yet began to guess why
'My heart it went throb with delight.
'We chang'd the stol'n glance, the fond smile,
'Which lovers alone read aright;
'We look'd, and we sigh'd, yet the while
'Our hearts they went throb with delight.
'Consent I soon blush'd, with a sigh,
'My promise I ventur'd to plight;
'Come, Hymen, we then shall know why
'Our hearts they go throb with delight.'

Enter Woodley.

Wood. My sweetest angel! I have heard all, and my heart overflows with love and gratitude.

Nan. Ah! but I did not know you was listening. You should not have betray'd me so, Dimity: I shall be angry with you.

Dim. Well, I'll take my chance for that.——Run both into my room, and say all your pretty things to one another there; for here comes the old gentleman—make haste, away. [*Exeunt* Woodley *and* Nancy.

Enter Drugget.

Drug. A forward presuming coxcomb!——Dimity, do you step to Mrs. Drugget, and send her hither.

Dim. Yes, Sir.——It works upon him, I see. [*Exit.*

Drug. The yew-trees ought not to be cut, because they'll help to keep off the dust, and I am too near the road already!—A sorry ignorant fop!—when I am in so fine a situation, and can see every carriage that goes by.——And then to abuse the nurseryman's rarities!—A

finer

finer sucking pig in lavender, with sage growing in his belly, was never seen!——And yet he wants me not to have it——But have it I will.——There's a fine tree of knowledge, too, with Adam and Eve in juniper; Eve's nose not quite grown, but 'tis thought in the spring will be very forward—I'll have that too; with the serpent in ground-ivy—two poets in wormwood—I'll have them both. Ay; and there's a Lord-Mayor's feast in honeysuckle; and the whole court of Aldermen in hornbeam: and three modern beaux in jessamine, somewhat stunted: they all shall be in my garden, with the Dragon of Wantley in box—all—all—I'll have 'em all, let my wife and Mr Lovelace say what they will——

Enter Mrs Drugget.

Mrs Drug. Did you send for me, lovely?

Drug. The yew-trees shall be cut into the giants of Guildhall, whether you will or not.

Mrs Drug. Sure my own dear will do as he pleases.

Drug. And the pond, tho' you praise the green banks, shall be wall'd round, and I shall have a little fat boy in marble, spouting up water in the middle.

Mrs Drug. My sweet, who hinders you?

Drug. Yes, and I'll buy the nurseryman's whole catalogue—Do you think, after retiring to live all the way here, almost four miles from London, that I won't do as I please in my own garden.

Mrs Drug. My dear, but why are you in such a passion?

Drug. I'll have the lavender-pig, and the Adam and Eve, and the Dragon of Wantley, and all of 'em—and there shan't be a more romantic spot on the London road than mine.

Mrs Drug. I'm sure 'tis as pretty as hands can make it.

Drug. I did it all myself, and I'll do more——And Mr Lovelace shan't have my daughter.

Mrs Drug. No! what's the matter now, Mr Drugget?

Drug. He shall learn better manners than to abuse my house and gardens.——You put him in the head of it; but I'll disappoint ye both—And so you may go and tell Mr Lovelace that the match is quite off.

Mrs Drug. I can't comprehend all this, not I;—but I'll tell him so, if you please, my dear——I am willing to give myself pain, if it will give you pleasure: Must I give myself pain?—Don't ask me, pray don't;—I don't like pain.

Drug. I am resolv'd, and it shall be so.

Mrs Drug. Let it be so then. [*Cries.*] Oh! oh! cruel man! I shall break my heart if the match is broke off—if it is not concluded to-morrow, send for an undertaker, and bury me the next day.

Drug. How! I don't want that neither—

Mrs Drug. Oh! oh!—

Drug. I am your lord and master, my dear, but not your executioner—Before George, it must never be said that my wife died of too much compliance—Cheer up, my love—and this affair shall be settled as soon as Sir Charles and my Lady Racket arrive.

Mrs Drug. You bring me to life again—You know, my sweet, what an happy couple Sir Charles and his lady are——Why should not we make our Nancy as happy?

Enter Dimity.

Dim. Sir Charles and his lady, Ma'am.

Mrs Drug. Oh! charming! I'm transported with joy!—Where are they? I long to see 'em. [*Exit.*

Dim. Well, Sir; the happy couple are arriv'd.

Drug. Yes, they do live happy indeed.

Dim. But how long will it last?

Drug. How long! don't forbode any ill, you jade—don't, I say—It will last during their lives, I hope.

Dim. Well, mark the end of it——Sir Charles, I know, is gay and good-humour'd—but he can't bear the least contradiction, no, not in the merest trifle.

Drug. Hold your tongue—hold your tongue.

Dim. Yes, Sir, I have done:—and yet there is in the composition of Sir Charles a certain humour, which, like the flying gout, gives no disturbance to the family till it settles in the head—When once it fixes there, mercy on every body about him! but here he comes. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. My dear Sir, I kiss your hand—but why stand

ſtand on ceremony? To find you up this late, mortifies me beyond expreſſion.

Drug. 'Tis but once in a way, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. My obligations to you are inexpreſſible; you have given me the moſt amiable of girls; our tempers accord like uniſons in muſic.

Drug. Ah! that's what makes me happy in my old days; my children and my garden are all my care.

Sir Cha. And my friend Lovelace—he is to have our ſiſter Nancy, I find.

Drug. Why, my wife is ſo minded.

Sir Cha. Oh, by all means, let her be made happy—A very pretty fellow Lovelace——And as to that Mr—Woodley, I think you call him—he is but a plain, underbred, ill-faſhioned ſort of a—nobody knows him; he is not one of us—Oh, by all means marry her to one of us.

Drug. I believe it muſt be ſo—Would you take any refreſhment?

Sir Cha. Nothing in nature—it is time to retire.

Drug. Well, well! good night then, Sir Charles—Ha! here comes my daughter———Good night, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Bon repos.

Drug. [*going out.*] My Lady Rackett, I'm glad to hear how happy you are, I won't detain you now——there's your good-man waiting for you——good night, my girl. [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. I muſt humour this old putt, in order to be remember'd in his will.

Enter Lady Rackett.

Lady Rac. O la!—I'm quite fatigu'd——I can hardly move——why don't you help me, you barbarous man?

Sir Cha. There; take my arm—"Was ever thing ſo pretty made to walk!"

Lady Rac. But I won't be laugh'd at—I don't love you.

Sir Cha. Don't you?

Lady Rac. No. Dear me! this glove! why don't you help me off with my glove! pſha!——You aukward thing, let it alone; you an't fit to be about me; I might as well not be married, for any uſe you are of—reach me

me a chair—you have no compaſſion for me——I am ſo glad to ſit down—Why do you drag me to routs?—You know I hate e'm.

Sir Cha. Oh! there's no exiſting, no breathing, unleſs one does as other people of faſhion do.

Lady Rac. But I'm out of humour, I loſt all my money.

Sir Cha. How much?

Lady Rac. Three hundred.

Sir Cha. Never fret for that—I don't value three hundred pounds to contribute to your happineſs.

Lady Rac. Don't you?——Not value three hundred pounds to pleaſe me!

Sir Cha. You know I don't.

Lady Rac. Ah! you fond fool!—But I hate gaming—It almoſt metamorphoſes a woman into a fury——Do you know that I was frighted at myſelf ſeveral times to-night—I had an huge oath at the very tip of my tongue.

Sir Cha. Had ye?

Lady Rac. I caught myſelf at it—and ſo I bit my lips—And then I was cramm'd up in a corner of the room with ſuch a ſtrange party at a whiſt-table, looking at black and red ſpots—did you mind 'em?

Sir Cha. You know I was buſy elſewhere.

Lady Rac. There was that ſtrange unaccountable woman Mrs Nightſhade—She behav'd ſo ſtrangely to her huſband, a poor, inoffenſive, good-natur'd, good ſort of a good-for-nothing kind of man.—But ſhe ſo teiz'd him—"How could you play that card? Ah, you've a head, and ſo has a pin—You're a numſkull, you know you are—Ma'am, he has the pooreſt head in the world, he does not know what he is about; you know you don't—Ah fie! I'am aſham'd of you!"

Sir Cha. She has ſerv'd to divert you, I ſee.

Lady Rac. And then, to crown all——there was my Lady Clackit, who runs on with an eternal volubility of nothing, out of all ſeaſon, time, and place——In the very midſt of the game ſhe begins,——"Lard, Ma'am, I was apprehenſive I ſhould not be able to wait on your La'ſhip——my poor little dog, Pompey—the ſweeteſt thing in the world—a ſpade led!—there's the knave——I was fetching a walk, Me'm, the other morning in the

Park

Park—a fine frosty morning it was—I love frosty weather of all things—let me look at the last trick——and so, M'em, little Pompey—and if your La'ship was to see the dear creature pinch'd with the frost, and mincing his steps along the Mall—with his pretty little innocent face—I vow I don't know what to play—And so, M'em, while I was talking to Captain Flimsey—your La'ship knows Captain Flimsey—Nothing but rubbish in my hand—I can't help it—And so, M'em, five odious frights of dogs beset my poor little Pompey—the dear creature has the heart of a lion, but who can resist five at once? —And so Pompey barked for assistance—the hurt he received was upon his chest—the doctor would not advise him to venture out till the wound is heal'd, for fear of an inflammation—Pray, what's trumps?"

Sir Cha. My dear, you'd make a most excellent actress.

Lady Rac. Well, now, let's go to rest—but Sir Charles, how shockingly you play'd that last rubber, when I stood looking over you!

Sir Cha. My love, I play'd the truth of the game.

Lady Rac. No, indeed, my dear, you play'd it wrong.

Sir Cha. Po! nonsense! you don't understand it.

Lady Rac. I beg your pardon, I'm allowed to play better than you.

Sir Cha. All conceit, my dear; I was perfectly right.

Lady Rac. No such thing, Sir Charles, the diamond was the play.

Sir Cha. Po! po! ridiculous! the club was the card against the world.

Lady Rac. Oh! no, no, no; I say it was the diamond.

Sir Cha. Zounds! Madam, I say it was the club.

Lady Rac. What do you fly into such a passion for?

Sir Cha. 'Sdeath and fury, do you think I don't know what I'm about? I tell you once more, the club was the judgment of it.

Lady Rac. May be so—have it your own way.

[*Walks about and sings.*

Sir Cha. Vexation! you're the strangest woman that ever liv'd; there's no conversing with you——Look'ye here,

here, my Lady Rackett—'tis the cleareſt caſe in the world, I'll make it plain in a moment.

Lady Rac. Well, Sir! ha! ha! ha!

[*With a ſneering laugh*

Sir Cha. I had four cards left—a trump has led——they were ſix——no, no, no, they were ſeven, and we nine——then you know——the beauty of the play was to——

Lady Rac. Well, now, 'tis amazing to me, that you can't ſee it—Give me leave, Sir Charles—your left-hand adverſary had led his laſt trump—and he had before fineſs'd the club and rough'd the diamond—now if you had put on your diamond——

Sir Cha. Zoons! Madam, but we play'd for the odd trick.

Lady Rac. And ſure the play for the odd trick——

Sir Cha. Death and fury! can't you hear me?

Lady Rac. Go on, Sir.

Sir Cha. Zoons! hear me, I ſay.——Will you hear me?

Lady Rac. I never heard the like in my life.

[*Hums a tune, and walks about fretfully.*

Sir Cha. Why then you are enough to provoke the patience of a Stoick.—[*Looks at her, and ſhe walks about and laughs uneaſily.*] Very well, Madam!—You know no more of the game than your father's leaden Hercules on the top of the houſe—You know no more of whiſt than he does of gardening.

Lady Rac. Ha! ha! ha!

[*Takes out a glaſs and ſettles her hair.*

Sir Cha. You're a vile woman, and I'll not ſleep another night under one roof with you.

Lady Rac. As you pleaſe, Sir.

Sir Cha. Madam, it ſhall be as I pleaſe—I'll order my chariot this moment—[*Going.*] I know how the cards ſhould be play'd as well as any man in England, that let me tell you—[*Going.*]—And when your family were ſtanding behind counters, meaſuring out tape, and bartering for Whitechapel needles, my anceſtors, my anceſtors, Madam, were ſquandering away whole eſtates at cards; whole eſtates, my Lady Rackett—[*She hums a tune, and he looks at her.*]—Why then, by all that's dear

to

to me, I'll never exchange another word with you, good, bad, or indifferent—Look'ye, my Lady Racket—thus it ſtood—the trump being led, it was then my buſineſs——

Lady Rac. To play the diamond, to be ſure.

Sir Cha. Damn it, I have done with you for ever; and ſo you may tell your father. [*Exit.*

Lady Rac. What a paſſion the gentleman's in! ha! ha! [*laughs in a peeviſh manner.*] I promiſe him, I'll not give up my judgment.

Enter Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. My Lady Racket, look ye, Ma'am—once more, out of pure good-nature——

Lady Rac. Sir, I am convinc'd of your good-nature.

Sir Cha. That, and that only, prevails with me to tell you, the club was the play.

Lady Rac. Well, be it ſo—I have no objection.

Sir Cha. 'Tis the cleareſt point in the world——we were nine, and——

Lady Rac. And for that very reaſon—You know the club was the beſt in the houſe.

Sir Cha. There's no ſuch thing as talking to you—You're a baſe woman—I'll part from you for ever; you may live here with your father, and admire his fantaſtical evergreens till you grow as fantaſtical yourſelf—I'll ſet out for London this inſtant—[*Stops at the door.*] The club was not the beſt in the houſe.

Lady Rac. How calm you are! Well!——I'll go to bed; will you come?——You had better——Come then—you ſhall come to bed—Not come to bed when I aſk you! Poor Sir Charles!

[*Looks and laughs, then* exit.

Sir Cha. That eaſe is provoking. [*Croſſes to the oppoſite door where ſhe went out.*]—I tell you the diamond was not the play; and I here take my final leave of you——[*Walks back as faſt as he can.*] I am reſolv'd upon it; and I know the club was not the beſt in the houſe. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Enter DIMITY.

DIMITY.

HA, ha, ha! Oh, Heavens! I ſhall expire in a fit of laughing—This is the modiſh couple that were ſo happy!—ſuch a quarrel as they have had—the whole houſe is in uproar—ha, ha! a rare proof of the happineſs they enjoy in high life. I ſhall never hear people of faſhion mentioned again, but I ſhall be ready to die in a fit of laughter—Ho! ho! ho! this is three weeks after marriage, I think.

Enter Drugget.

Drug. Hey! how! what's the matter, Dimity?——What am I call'd down ſtairs for?

Dim. Why, there's two people of faſhion——

[*Stifles a laugh.*

Drug. Why, you ſaucy minx!——Explain this moment.

Dim. The fond couple have been together by the ears this half hour—are you ſatisfied now?

Drug. Ay!—What, have they quarrell'd?—what was it about?

Dim. Something above my comprehenſion, and your's too, I believe—People in high life underſtand their own forms beſt—And here comes one that can unriddle the whole affair. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. [*to the people within.*] I ſay, let the horſes be put to this moment—So, Mr Drugget.

Drug. Sir Charles, here's a terrible buſtle—I did not expect this—what can be the matter?

Sir Cha. I have been us'd by your daughter in ſo baſe, ſo contemptuous a manner, that I am determined not to ſtay in this houſe to-night.

Drug. This is a thunderbolt to me! after ſeeing how elegantly and faſhionably you liv'd together, to find now all ſun-ſhine vaniſh'd—Do, Sir Charles, let me heal this breach, if poſſible.

Sir

Sir Cha. Sir, 'tis impoſſible—I'll not live with her a day longer.

Drug. Nay, nay, don't be over haſty—let me intreat you, go to bed and ſleep upon it—in the morning, when you're cool——

Sir Cha. Oh, Sir, I am very cool, I aſſure——ha! ha!—it is not in her power, Sir, to—a—a—to diſturb the ſerenity of my temper—Don't imagine that I'm in a paſſion—I'm not ſo eaſily ruffled as you may imagine—But quietly and deliberately I can repay the injuries done me by a falſe, ungrateful, deceitful wife.

Drug. The injuries done you by a falſe, ungrateful wife! My daughter, I hope—

Sir Cha. Her character is now fully known to me—ſhe's a vile woman! That's all I have to ſay, Sir.

Drug. Hey! how!—a vile woman!—What has ſhe done—I hope ſhe is not capable——

Sir Cha. I ſhall enter into no detail, Mr Drugget; the time and circumſtances won't allow it at preſent—But depend upon it, I have done with her—a low, unpoliſh'd, uneducated, falſe, impoſing—See if the horſes are put to.

Drug. Mercy on me, in my old days to hear this!

Enter Mrs Drugget.

Mrs Drug. Deliver me! I am all over in ſuch a tremble—Sir Charles, I ſhall break my heart if there's any thing amiſs.

Sir Cha. Madam, I am very ſorry, for your ſake—but there is no poſſibility of living with her.

Mrs Drug. My poor dear girl! What can ſhe have done?

Sir Cha. What all her ſex can do, the very ſpirit of them all.

Drug. Ay! ay! ay!—She's bringing foul diſgrace upon us——This comes of her marrying a man of faſhion.

Sir Cha. Faſhion, Sir!—that ſhould have inſtructed her better—ſhe might have been ſenſible of her happineſs—Whatever you may think of the fortune you gave her, my rank in life claims reſpect—claims obedience, attention, truth, and love, from one raiſed in the world, as ſhe has been, by an alliance with me.

Drug. And let me tell you, however you may eſtimate your quality, my daughter is dear to me.

Sir Cha. And, Sir, my character is dear to me.

Drug. Yet you muſt give me leave to tell you—

Sir Cha. I won't hear a word.

Drug. Not in behalf of my own daughter?

Sir Cha. Nothing can excuſe her—'tis to no purpoſe—ſhe has married above her; and if that circumſtance makes the lady forget herſelf, ſhe at leaſt ſhall ſee that I can and will ſupport my own dignity.

Drug. But, Sir, I have a right to aſk——

Mrs Drug. Patience, my dear; be a little calm.

Drug. Mrs Drugget, do you have patience; I muſt and will inquire.

Mrs Drug. Don't be ſo haſty, my love: have ſome reſpect for Sir Charles's rank; don't be violent with a man of his faſhion.

Drug. Hold your tongue, woman, I ſay—you're not a perſon of faſhion at leaſt—My daughter was ever a good girl.

Sir Cha. I have found her out.

Drug. Oh, then it is all over—and it does not ſignify arguing about it.

Mrs Drug. That ever I ſhould live to ſee this hour! how the unfortunate girl could take ſuch wickedneſs in her head, I can't imagine—I'll go and ſpeak to the unhappy creature this moment. [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. She ſtands detected now—detected in her trueſt colours.

Drug. Well, grievous as it may be, let me hear the circumſtances of this unhappy buſineſs.

Sir Cha. Mr Drugget, I have not leiſure now—but her behaviour has been ſo exaſperating, that I ſhall make the beſt of my way to town—My mind is fixed——She ſees me no more; and ſo, your ſervant, Sir. [*Exit.*

Drug. What a calamity has here befallen us! a good girl, and ſo well diſpos'd, till the evil communication of high life, and faſhionable vices, turn'd her to folly.

Enter Lovelace.

Love. Joy! joy! Mr Drugget, I give you joy.

Drug. Don't inſult me, Sir!—I deſire you won't.

Love. Inſult you, Sir!—is there any thing inſulting

ing, my dear Sir, if I take the liberty to congratulate you on——

Drug. There! there!—the manners of high life for you——he thinks there's nothing in all this—the ill behaviour of a wife he thinks an ornament to her character——Mr Lovelace, you shall have no daughter of mine.

Love. My dear Sir, never bear malice,—I have reconsidered the thing; and curse catch me, if I don't think your notion of the Guildhall giants and the court of Aldermen in hornbeam——

Drug. Well! well! well! there may be people at the court-end of the town in hornbeam too.

Love. Yes, faith, so there may—and I believe I could recommend you to a tolerable collection—however, with your daughter I am ready to venture.

Drug. But I am not ready——I'll not venture my girl with you—no more daughters of mine shall have their minds deprav'd by polite vices.

'*Enter* Woodley.

'Mr Woodley—you shall have Nancy to your wife, as 'I promis'd you—take her to-morrow morning.

'*Wood.* Sir, I have not words to express——

'*Love.* What the devil is the matter with the old halberdasher now?

'*Drug.* And hark ye, Mr Woodley—I'll make you 'a present for your garden of a coronation-dinner in 'greens, with the champion riding on horseback, and the 'sword will be full-grown before April next.

'*Wood.* I shall receive it, Sir, as your favour.

'*Drug.* Ay, ay! I see my error in wanting an al'liance with great folks—I had rather have you, Mr 'Woodley, for my son-in-law, than any courtly fop o'f 'em all. Is this man gone?—Is Sir Charles Rackets 'gone?

'*Wood.* Not yet;——he makes a bawling yonder for 'his horses—I'll step and call him to you. [*Exit.*

'*Drug.* I am out of all patience—I am out of my 'senses—I must see him once more'—Mr Lovelace, neither you nor any person of fashion shall ruin another daughter of mine. [*Exit.*

Lov. Droll this!——damn'd droll! and every syl-

lable of it Arabic to me—The queer old putt is as whimsical in his notions of life as of gardening. If this be the case—I'll brush, and leave him to his exotics. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Rackett, Mrs Drugget, *and* Dimity.

Lady Rac. A cruel, barbarous man! to quarrel in this unaccountable manner; to alarm the whole house, and expose me and himself too.

Mrs Drug. Oh, child! I never thought it would have come to this—Your shame won't end here! it will be all over St James's parish by to-morrow morning.

Lady Rac. Well, if it must be so, there's one comfort, the story will tell more to his disgrace than mine.

Dim. As I'm a sinner, and so it will, Madam. He deserves what he has met with, I think.

Mrs Drug. Dimity, don't you encourage her—you shock me to hear you speak so—I did not think you had been so harden'd.

Lady Rac. Harden'd do you call it?—I have liv'd in the world to very little purpose if such trifles as these are to disturb my rest.

Mrs Drug. You wicked girl!—Do you call it a trifle to be guilty of falsehood to your husband's bed?

Lady Rac. How!——

[*Turns short and stares at her.*

'*Dim.* That! that's a mere trifle indeed—I have been 'in as good places as any body, and not a creature 'minds it now, I'm sure.

'*Mrs Drug.* My Lady Rackett, my Lady Rackett, 'I never could think to see you come to this deplorable 'shame.

'*Lady Rac.* Surely the base man has not been ca-'pable of laying any thing of that sort to my charge. '[*Aside.*]—All this is unaccountable to me—ha! ha!—'tis ridiculous beyond measure.

'*Dim.* That's right, Madam:—laugh at it—you 'serv'd him right.

'*Mrs Drug* Charlotte! Charlotte! I'm astonish'd at 'your wickedness.

'*Lady Rac.* Well, I protest and vow I don't compre-'hend all this.'—Has Sir Charles accus'd me of any impropriety in my conduct?

Mrs

Mrs Drug. Oh! too true, he has—He has found you out; and you have behav'd basely, he says.

Lady Rac. Madam.

Mrs Drug. You have fallen into frailty, like many others of your sex, he says; and he is resolv'd to come to a separation directly.

Lady Rac. Why then, if he is so base a wretch as to dishonour me in that manner, his heart shall ache before I live with him again.

Dim. Hold to that, Ma'am; and let his head ache into the bargain.

Mrs Drug. Your poor father heard it as well as me.

Lady Rac. Then let your doors be opened for him this very moment—let him return to London—If he does not, I'll lock myself up; and the false one shan't approach me, tho' he beg on his knees at my very door ——a base injurious man! [*Exit.*

Mrs Drug. Dimity, do, let us follow, and hear what she has to say for herself. [*Exit.*

Dim. She has excuse enough, I warrant her—What a noise is here indeed!—I have liv'd in polite families, where there was no such bustle made about nothing. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Charles *and* Drugget.

Sir Cha. 'Tis in vain, Sir; my resolution is taken——

Drug. Well, but consider, I am her father——indulge me only till we hear what the girl has to say in her defence.

Sir Cha. She can have nothing to say—no excuse can palliate such behaviour.

Drug. Don't be too positive—there may be some mistake.

Sir Cha. No mistake—did not I see her, hear her myself?

Drug. Lackaday! then I am an unfortunate man!

Sir Cha. She will be unfortunate too—with all my heart—she may thank herself—she might have been happy, had she been so dispos'd.

Drug. Why, truly, I think she might.

Enter Mrs Drugget.

Mrs Drug. I wish you'd moderate your anger a little——and

—and let us talk over this affair with temper—my daughter denies every tittle of your charge.

Sir Cha. Denies it! denies it!

Mrs Drug. She does indeed.

Sir Cha. And that aggravates her fault.

Mrs Drug. She vows you never found her out in any thing that was wrong.

Sir Cha. So! she does not allow it to be wrong then?—Madam, I tell you again, I know her thoroughly; I say, I have found her out, and I am now acquainted with her character.

Mrs Drug. Then you are in opposite stories—she swears, my dear Mr Drugget, the poor girl swears she never was guilty of the smallest infidelity to her husband in her born days.

Sir Cha. And what then?—what if she does say so?

Mrs Drug. And if she says truly, it is hard her character should be blown upon without just cause.

Sir Cha. And is she therefore to behave ill in other respects? I never charg'd her with infidelity to me, Madam——There I allow her innocent.

Drug. And did not you charge her then?

Sir Cha. No, Sir, I never dreamt of such a thing.

Drug. Why then, if she's innocent, let me tell you, you're a scandalous person.

Mrs Drug. Prithee, my dear——

Drug. Be quiet—tho' he is a man of quality, I will tell him of it——did not I fine for sheriff?—Yes, you are a scandalous person to defame an honest man's daughter.

Sir Cha. What have you taken into your head now?

Drug. You charg'd her with falsehood to your bed.

Sir Cha. No—never—never.

Drug. But I say you did—you call'd yourself a cuckold—did not he, wife?

Mrs Drug. Yes, lovely, I'm witness.

Sir Cha. Absurd! I said no such thing.

Drug. But I aver you did.

Mrs Drug. You did, indeed, Sir.

Sir Cha. But I tell you no—positively no.

Drug. and *Mrs Drug.* And I say yes, positively yes——

Sir Cha. 'Sdeath, this is all madneſs—

Drug. You ſaid ſhe follow'd the ways of moſt of her ſex.

Sir Cha. I ſaid ſo——and what then?

Drug. There, he owns it—owns that he call'd himſelf a cuckold—and without rhime or reaſon into the bargain.

Sir Cha. I never own'd any ſuch thing.

Drug. You own'd it even now—now—now—now.

Enter Dimity, *in a fit of laughing.*

Dim. What do you think it was all about—ha, ha! the whole ſecret is come out, ha, ha!—It was all about a game of cards—ha, ha!—

Drug. A game of cards!

Dim. [*laughing.*] It was all about a club and a diamond. [*Runs out laughing.*

Drug. And was that all, Sir Charles?

Sir Cha. And enough too, Sir—

Drag. And was that what you found her out in?

Sir Cha. I can't bear to be contradicted when I'm clear that I'm in the right.

Drug. I never heard ſuch a heap of nonſenſe in all my life—Woodley ſhall marry Nancy.

Mrs Drug. Don't be in a hurry, my love, this will all be made up.

Drug Why does not he go and beg her pardon, then?

Sir Cha. I beg her pardon! I won't debaſe myſelf to any of you—I ſhan't forgive her, you may reſt aſſur'd. [*Exit.*

Drug. Now there—there's a pretty fellow for you!

Mrs Drug. I'll ſtep and prevail on my Lady Rackett to ſpeak to him—then all will be well. [*Exit.*

Drug. A ridiculous fop! I'm glad 'tis no worſe, however.

Enter Nancy.

So Nancy—you ſeem in confuſion, my girl!

Nan. How can one help it?—With all this noiſe in the houſe, and you're going to marry me as ill as my ſiſter—I hate Mr Loveface.

Drug. Why ſo, child?

Nan. I know theſe people of quality deſpiſe us all out

out of pride, and would be glad to marry us out of avarice.

Drug. The girl's right.

Nan. They marry one woman, live with another, and love only themſelves.

Drug. And then quarrel about a card.

Nan. I don't want to be a gay lady——I want to be happy.

Drug. And ſo you ſhall—don't fright yourſelf, child——ſtep to your ſiſter, bid her make herſelf eaſy—go and comfort her, go.

Nan. Yes, Sir. [*Exit.*

Drug. I'll ſtep and ſettle the matter with Mr Woodley this moment. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Charles, *with a pack of cards in his hand.*

Sir Cha. Never was any thing like her behaviour—I can pick out the very cards I had in my hand; and then 'tis as plain as the ſun—there—now—there—no—dam'n it—no—there it was—now let's ſee—they had four by honours—and we play'd for the odd trick—damnation! honours were divided—ay!—honours were divided—and then a trump was led—and the other ſide had the—confuſion!—this prepoſterous woman has put it all out of my head—[*Puts the cards into his pocket.*] Mighty well, Madam; I have done with you.

Enter Mrs Drugget.

Mrs Drug. Come, Sir Charles, let me prevail—Come with me and ſpeak to her.

Sir Cha. I don't deſire to ſee her face.

Mrs Drug. If you were to ſee her all bath'd in tears, I am ſure it would melt your very heart.

Sir Cha. Madam, it ſhall be my fault if ever I am treated ſo again—I'll have nothing to ſay to her—[*Going, ſtops.*] Does ſhe give up the point?

Mr. Drug. She does, ſhe agrees to any thing.

Sir Cha. Does ſhe allow that the club was the play?

Mrs Drug. Juſt as you pleaſe—ſhe's all ſubmiſſion.

Sir Cha. Does ſhe own that the club was not the beſt in the houſe?

Mrs Drug. She does——ſhe does,

Sir Cha. Then I'll ſtep and ſpeak to her——I never was clearer in any thing in my life.——But, Mrs Drug-

get,

get, give me leave to aſk you—You are a very ſenſible woman now——Ill ſhow you——Here are the very cards——

Mrs Drug. Lord, Sir, I underſtand nothing at all about cards.——

Sir Cha. Damn me, if ever I ſaw ſuch an obſtinate family all my life. [*Exit.*

Mrs Drug. Lord love 'em, they'll make it up now—and then they'll be as happy as ever. [*Exit.*

Enter Nancy.

Nan. Well, they may talk what they will of taſte, and genteel life——I don't think 'tis natural——Give me Mr Woodley——La! there's that odious thing coming this way.

Enter Lovelace.

Love. My charming little innocent, I have not ſeen you theſe three hours.

Nan. I have been very happy theſe three hours.

Love. My ſweet angel, you ſeem diſconcerted——And you neglect your pretty figure——No matter for the preſent; in a little time I ſhall make you appear as graceful and genteel as your ſiſter.

'*Nan.* That is not what employs my thoughts, Sir.

'*Love.* Ay, but my pretty little dear, that ſhould engage your attention——to ſet off and adorn the charms 'that nature has given you ſhould be the buſineſs of 'your life.

'*Nan.* Ah, but I have learn'd a new ſong that contradicts what you ſay; and tho' I am not in a very good 'humour for ſinging, yet you ſhall hear it.

'*Love.* By all means——don't check your fancy—'I'm all attention.

'*Nan.* It expreſſes my ſentiments; and when you have 'heard them, you won't teize me any more.

'SONG.

'To dance and to dreſs, and to flount it about;
'To run to park, play, to aſſembly and rout;
'To wander for ever in whim's giddy maze,
'And one poor hair torture a million of ways;
'To put, at the glaſs, every feature to ſchool,
'And practiſe their art on each fop and each fool;

Of

'Of one thing to think, and another to tell:
'Theſe, theſe are the manners of each giddy belle.
'To ſmile and to ſimper, white teeth to diſplay;
'The time in gay follies to trifle away;
'Againſt every virtue the boſom to ſteel,
'And only of dreſs the anxieties feel;
'To be at Eve's ear the inſidious decoy;
'The pleaſure ne'er taſte, yet the miſchief enjoy;
'To boaſt of ſoft raptures they never can know:
'Theſe, theſe are the manners of each giddy beau.
'[*Exit.*'

Nan. May be ſo, Sir; but I'm not at leiſure to receive your inſtructions—and ſo your ſervant, Sir. [*Exit.*

Love. I muſt have her, notwithſtanding this——for tho' I'm not in love, yet I'm in debt.

Enter Drugget.

Drug. So, Mr Lovelace! Any news from above ſtairs? Is this abſurd quarrel at an end—Have they made it up?

Love. Oh! a mere bagatelle, Sir—theſe little fracas among the better ſort of people never laſt long—Elegant trifles cauſe elegant diſputes; and we come together elegantly again—as you ſee—for here they come, in perfect good humour.

Enter Sir Charles *and* Lady Rackett.

Sir Cha. Mr Drugget, I embrace you; Sir, you ſee me now in the moſt perfect harmony of ſpirits.

Drug. What, all reconcil'd again?

Lady Rac. All made up, Sir—I knew how to bring him to my lure—This is the firſt difference, I think, we ever had, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. And I'll be ſworn it ſhall be the laſt.

Drug. I am happy at laſt——Sir Charles, I can ſpare you an image to put on the top of your houſe in London.

Sir Cha. Infinitely oblig'd to you.

Drug. Well, well——'Tis time to retire now——I am glad to ſee you reconciled——and now I'll wiſh you a good night, Sir Charles——Mr Lovelace, this is your way——fare ye well both——I am glad your quarrels are at an end—This way, Mr Lovelace.

[*Exeunt* Lovelace *and* Drugget.

Sir

Lady Rac. Ah! you're a ſad man, Sir Charles, to behave to me as you have done.

Sir Cha. My dear, I grant it——and ſuch an abſurd quarrel too—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. Yes—ha, ha!—about ſuch a trifle.

Sir Cha. 'Tis pleaſant how we could both fall into ſuch an error—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. Ridiculous beyond expreſſion—ha, ha!

Sir Cha. And then the miſtake your father and mother fell into—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. That too is a diverting part of the ſtory—ha, ha!—But, Sir Charles, muſt I ſtay and live with my father till I grow as fantaſtical as his own evergreens?

Sir Cha. No, no, prithee—don't remind me of my folly.

Lady Rac. Ah! my relations were all ſtanding behind counters, ſelling Whitechapel needles, while your family were ſpending great eſtates.

Sir Cha. Nay, nay, ſpare my bluſhes.

Lady Rac. How could you ſay ſo harſh a thing?—I don't love you.

Sir Cha. It was indelicate, I grant it.

Lady Rac. Am I a vile woman?

Sir Cha. How can you, my angel?

Lady Rac. I ſhan't forgive you!—I'll have you on your knees for this. [*Sings and plays with him*]—"Go, naughty man."—Ah! Sir Charles!

Sir Cha. The reſt of my life ſhall aim at convincing you how ſincerely I love—

Lady Rac. [*ſings.*] "Go, naughty man, I can't abide you."—Well! come let us go to reſt. [*Going.*] Ah, Sir Charles!—now it is all over, the diamond was the play.

Sir Cha. Oh no, no, no,—my dear! ha, ha!—it was the club indeed.

Lady Rac. Indeed, my love, you're miſtaken.

Sir Cha. Oh, no, no, no.

Lady Rac. But I ſay yes, yes, yes—[*Both laughing.*]

Sir Cha. Pſha! no ſuch thing—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. 'Tis ſo indeed—ha, ha!

Sir Cha. No, no, no—you'll make me die with laughing.

Lady Rac. Ay, and you make me laugh too—ha, ha! [*Toying with him.*

Enter Footman.

Foot. Your honour's cap and ſlippers.

Sir Cha. Ay, lay down my night-cap—and here, take theſe ſhoes off. [*He takes 'em off, and leaves 'em at a diſtance.*] Indeed, my Lady Rackett, you make me ready to expire with laughing—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. You may laugh—but I'm right, notwithſtanding.

Sir Cha. How can you ſay ſo?

Lady Rac. How can you ſay otherwiſe?

Sir Cha. Well, now mind me, my Lady Racket—We can now talk of this matter in good-humour—We can diſcuſs it coolly—

Lady Rac. So we can—and 'tis for that reaſon I venture to ſpeak to you—Are theſe the ruffles I bought for you?

Sir Cha. They are, my dear,

Lady Rac. They are very pretty——But indeed you played the card wrong.

Sir Cha. Po, there is nothing ſo clear—if you will but hear me—only hear me.

Lady Rac. Ah!—but do you hear me—the thing was thus—The adverſary's club being the beſt in the houſe—

Sir Cha. How can you talk ſo!—[*ſomewhat peeviſh.*

Lady Rac. See there now——

Sir Cha. Liſten to me——This was the affair——

Lady R. Pſha! fiddleſtick! hear me firſt.

Sir. Cha. Po——no——damn it, let me ſpeak.

'*Lady Rac.* Well, to be ſure you're a ſtrange man.

'*Sir Cha.* Plague and torture! there is no ſuch thing 'as converſing with you.

'*Lady Rac.* Very well, Sir! fly out again.

'*Sir Cha.* Look here now——here's a pack of cards, 'now you ſhall be convinc'd——'

Lady Rac. You may talk till to-morrow; I know I'm right. [*Walks about.*

Sir Cha. Why then, by all that's perverſe, you are the moſt headſtrong—Can't you look here now——here are the very cards.

Lady Rac. Go on; you'll find it out at laſt.

Sir Cha. Damn it! will you let a man ſhow you. Po! 'tis

'tis all nonſenſe—I'll talk no more about it—[*puts up the cards.*] Come, we'll go to bed. [*Going.*] Now, only ſtay a moment—[*takes out the cards.*] Now, mind me—ſee here.

Lady Rac. No, it does not ſignify—your head will be clearer in the morning—I'll go to bed.

Sir Cha. Stay a moment, can't ye?

Lady Rac. No—my head begins to ache—[*affectedly.*]

Sir Cha. Why then, damn the cards—there—there [*throwing the cards about*] and there, and there—You may go to bed by yourſelf; and confuſion ſeize me if I live a moment longer with you—[*Putting on his ſhoes again.*]

'*Enter* Dimity.

'*Dim.* Did you call, Sir?

'*Sir Cha.* No, never, Madam.

'*Dim.* [*in a fit of laughing.*] What, at it again!

Lady Rac. Take your own way, Sir.

Sir Cha. Now then, I tell you once more you are a vile woman.

'*Dim.* La, Sir! This is charming—I'll run and tell the old couple. [*Exit.*'

Sir Cha. [*ſtill putting on his ſhoes.*] You are the moſt perverſe, obſtinate, nonſenſical——

Lady Rac. Ha, ha! don't make me laugh again, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Hell and the devil——Will you ſit down quietly, and let me convince you?

Lady Rac. I don't chooſe to hear any more about it.

Sir Cha. Why then I believe you are poſſeſſed—it is in vain to talk ſenſe and reaſon to you.

Lady Rac. Thank you for your compliment, Sir——ſuch a man [*with a ſneering laugh.*] I never knew the like— [*Sits down.*

Sir Cha. I promiſe you, you ſhall repent of this uſage, before you have a moment of my company again—it ſhan't be in a hurry you may depend, Madam—Now ſee here—I can prove it to a demonſtration [*Sits down by her, ſhe gets up*] Look ye there again now—you have the moſt perverſe and peeviſh temper—I wiſh I had never ſeen your face—I wiſh I was a thouſand miles off from you—Sit down but one moment.

Lady Rac. I'm diſpos'd to walk about, Sir.

Sir Cha. Why then, may I periſh if ever—a block-head—an idiot I was, to marry [*walks about*] ſuch a provoking—impertinent—[*She ſits down.*] Damnation!—I am ſo clear in the thing—ſhe is not worth my notice—[*Sits down, turns his back, and looks uneaſy.*] I'll take no more pains about it—[*Pauſes for ſome time, then looks at her.*] Is not it very ſtrange that you won't hear me?

Lady Rac. Sir, I am very ready to hear you.

Sir Cha. Very well then—very well—my dear—you remember how the game ſtood.

Lady Rac. I wiſh you'd untie my necklace, it hurts me.

Sir Cha. Why can't you liſten?

Lady Rac. I tell you it hurts me terribly.

Sir Cha. Death and confuſion! there is no bearing this—you may be as wrong as you pleaſe; and may I never hold four by honours, if I ever endeavour to ſet you right again. [*Exit.*

Enter Mr *and* Mrs Drugget, Woodley, Lovelace, *and* Naney.

Drug. What's here to do now?

Lady Rac. Never was ſuch a man born—I did not ſay a word to the gentleman—and yet he has been raving about the room like a madman.

Drug. And about a club again, I ſuppoſe—Come hither, Nancy; Mr Woodley, ſhe is your's for life.

Mrs Drug. My dear, how can you be ſo—

Drug. It ſhall be ſo——take her for life, Mr Woodley.

Wood. My whole life ſhall be devoted to her happineſs.

Love. The devil! and ſo I am to be left in the lurch in this manner, am I?

Lady Rac. Oh! this is only one of thoſe polite diſputes which people of quality, who have nothing elſe to differ about, muſt always be liable to—This will all be be made up.

Drug. Never tell me—'tis too late now—Mr Woodley, I recommend my girl to your care—I ſhall have nothing now to think of, but my greens, and my images, and my ſhrubbery—though, mercy on all married folks,

ſay

ſay I! for theſe wranglings are, I am afraid, *What we muſt all come to.*

Lady Rackett *coming forward.*

What we muſt all come to? What?—Come to what? Muſt broils and quarrels be the marriage-lot? If that's the wife, deep meaning of our poet, The man's a fool! a blockhead! and I'll ſhow it.

'What could induce him, in an age ſo nice,
'So fam'd for virtue, ſo refin'd from vice,
'To form a plan ſo trivial, falſe, and low?
'As if a belle could quarrel with a beau:
'As if there were, in theſe thrice happy days,
'One who from nature or from reaſon ſtrays!
'There's no croſs huſband now, no wrangling wife;
'The man is downright ignorant of life.
''Tis the millennium this—devoid of guile.
'Fair gentle truth and white-rob'd candour ſmile.
'From every breaſt the ſordid love of gold
'Is baniſh'd quite—no boroughs now are ſold!
'Pray tell me, Sirs— [for I don't know, I vow,]
'Pray—is there ſuch a thing as gaming now?
'Do peers make laws againſt that giant vice?
'And then at Arthur's break them in a trice?
'No—no—our lives are virtuous all, auſtere and hard;
'Pray, Ladies—do you ever ſee a card?
'Thoſe empty boxes ſhow you don't love plays;
'The managers, poor ſouls! get nothing now a-days.
'If here you come—by chance but once a-week,
'The pit can witneſs that you never ſpeak:
'Penſive attention ſits with decent mien;
'No paint, no naked ſhoulders, to be ſeen!'

And yet this grave, this moral, pious age,
May learn one uſeful leſſon from the ſtage.
Shun ſtrife, ye fair; and, once a conteſt o'er,
Wake to a blaze the dying flame no more—
From fierce debate, fly all the tender loves;
And Venus cries, "Coachman, put to my doves:"
The genial bed no blooming Grace prepares,
"And every day becomes a day of cares."

BON TON;

OR,

HIGH LIFE ABOVE STAIRS.

IN TWO ACTS.

By DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

	Drury-Lane.	*Edinburgh,* 1783.
Lord Minikin,	Mr Dodd.	Mr Ward.
Sir John Trotley,	Mr King.	Mr Johnſon.
Colonel Tivy,	Mr Brereton.	Mr Woods.
Jeſſamy.	Mr La Maſh.	Mr La Maſh.
Davy,	Mr Parſons.	Mr Moſs.
Mignon,	Mr Burton.	

WOMEN.

Lady Minikin,	Mrs King.	Mrs Walcot.
Miſs Tittup,	Mrs Abington.	Mrs Sparks.
Gymp,	Miſs Platt.	Mrs Mills.

PROLOGUE.

Written by GEORGE COLEMAN.

Spoken by Mr KING.

FASHION in ev'ry thing bears ſov'reign ſway,
And words and periwigs have both their day:
Each have their purlieus too, are modiſh each
In ſtated diſtricts, wigs as well as ſpeech.
The Tyburn ſcratch, thick club, and Temple tie,
The parſon's feather-top frizz'd broad and high,

The

The coachman's cauliflower built tiers on tiers
Differ not more from bags and brigadiers,
Than great St George's or St James's ſtiles,
From the Broad dialect of broad St Giles.
What is *bon ton?*—Oh, damme, cries a buck—
Half drunk—aſk me, my dear, and you're in luck!
Bon ton's to ſwear, break windows, beat the watch,
Pick up a wench, drink healths, and roar a catch.
Keep it up, keep it up! damme, take your ſwing!
Bon ton is life, my boy; *bon ton*'s the thing!
Ah! I loves life, and all the joys it yields—
Says madam Fuſſock, warm from Spital-fields.
Bone Tone's the ſpace 'twixt Saturday and Monday,
And riding in a one-horſe chair o' Sunday!
'Tis drinking tea on ſummer-afternoons
At Bagnigge-Wells, with china and gilt ſpoons!
'Tis laying by our ſtuffs, red cloaks, and pattens,
To dance cow-tillons, all in ſilks and ſatins!
Vulgar! cries Miſs. Obſerve in higher life
The feather'd ſpinſter and thrice-feather'd wife!
The club's *bon ton*. *Bon ton*'s a conſtant trade
Of rout, feſtino, ball, and maſquerade!
'Tis plays and puppet-ſhews; 'tis ſomething new!
'Tis loſing thouſands ev'ry night at loo!
Nature it thwarts, and contradicts all reaſon;
'Tis ſtiff French ſtays, and fruit when out of ſeaſon!
A roſe when half a guinea is the price,
A ſet of bays ſcarce bigger than ſix mice;
To viſit friends you never wiſh to ſee;
Marriage 'twixt thoſe who never can agree;
Old dowagers dreſt, painted, patch'd, and curl'd;
This is *bon ton*, and this we call the world!
* [True, ſays my Lord; and thou, my only ſon,
Whate'er your faults, ne'er ſin againſt *bon ton!*
Who toils for learning at a public ſchool,
And digs for Greek and Latin, is a fool.
French, French, my boy's the thing! *jaſez!* prate, chatter!
Trim be the mode, whipt-ſyllabub the matter!
Walk like a Frenchman! for on Engliſh pegs
Moves native aukwardneſs with two left legs.
Of courtly friendſhip form a treacherous league;
Seduce mens daughters, with their wives intrigue:
In ſightly ſemicircles round your nails,
Keep your teeth clean—and grin, if ſmall talk fails—
But never laugh, whatever jeſt prevails!
Nothing but nonſenſe e'er gave laughter birth;
That vulgar way the vulgar ſhow their mirth.
Laughter's a rude convulſion, ſenſe that juſtles,
Diſturbs the cockles, and diſtorts the muſcles.
Hearts may be black, but all ſhould wear clean faces;
The graces, boy! the graces, graces, graces!]

Such

* The lines between crotchets are omitted at the theatre.

Such is *bon ton!* and, walk this city thro',
In building, scribbling, fighting, and vertú,
And various other shapes, 'twill rise to view.
To-night our Bayes, with bold, but careless tints,
Hits off a sketch or two, like Darly's prints.
Should connoisseurs allow his rough draughts strike 'em,
'Twill be *bon ton* to see 'em and to like 'em.

ACT I.

Enter Lady MINIKIN *and Miss* TITTUP.

Lady MINIKIN.

IT is not, my dear, that I have the least regard for my lord; I had no love for him before I married him, and you know matrimony is no breeder of affection; but it hurts my pride that he should neglect me and run after other women.

Miss Tit. Ha, ha, ha! How can you be so hypocritical, lady Minikin, as to pretend to uneasiness at such trifles: but, pray, have you made any new discoveries of my lord's gallantry?

La. Min. New discoveries! why, I saw him myself yesterday morning in a hackney-coach with a minx in a pink cardinal; you shall absolutely burn your's, Tittup, for I shall never bear to see one of that colour again.

Miss Tit. Sure she does not suspect me. [*Aside.*] And where was your ladyship, pray, when you saw him?

La. Min. Taking the air with colonel Tivy in his vis-a-vis.

Miss Tit. But, my dear lady Minikin, how can you be so angry that my lord was hurting your pride, as you call it, in the hackney-coach, when you had him so much in your power in the vis-a-vis?

La. Min. What, with my lord's friend, and my friend's lover! [*Takes her by the hand.*] O fie, Tittup.

Miss Tit. Poo, poo! Love and friendship are very fine names, to be sure, but they are mere visiting acquaintance; we know their names indeed, talk of 'em sometimes, and let 'em knock at our doors, but we never let 'em in, you know. [*Looking roguishly at her.*

La.

La. Min. I vow, Tittup, you are extremely polite.

Miſs Tit. I am extremely indifferent in theſe affairs, thanks to my education.—We muſt marry, you know, becauſe other people of faſhion marry; but I ſhould think very meanly of myſelf if, after I was married, I ſhould feel the leaſt concern at all about my huſband.

La. Min. I hate to praiſe myſelf, and yet I may with truth aver, that no woman of quality ever had, can have, or will have, ſo conſummate a contempt for her lord, as I have for moſt honourable and puiſſant Earl of Minikin, Viſcount Periwinkle, and Baron Titmouſe—Ha, ha, ha!

Miſs Tit. But is it not ſtrange, lady Minikin, that merely his being your huſband ſhould create ſuch indifference? for certainly, in every other eye, his lordſhip has great accompliſhments.

La. Min. Accompliſhments! thy head is certainly turn'd; if you know any of 'em, pray let's have 'em; they are a novelty, and will amuſe me.

Miſs Tit. Imprimis, he is a man of quality.

La. Min. Which, to be ſure, includes all the cardinal virtues:—poor girl! go on.

Miſs Tit. He is a very handſome man.

La. Min. He has a very bad conſtitution.

Miſs Tit. He has wit.

La. Min. He is a lord, and a little goes a great way.

Miſs Tit. He has great good-nature.

La. Min. No wonder, he's a fool.

Miſs Tit. And then his fortune, you'll allow—

La. Min. Was a great one—but he games; and, if fairly, he's undone; if not, he deſerves to be hang'd—and ſo, *exit* my lord Minikin—And now, let your wife uncle and my good couſin Sir John Trotley, baronet, enter: Where is he, pray?

Miſs Tit. In his own room, I ſuppoſe, reading pamphlets and newſpapers againſt the enormities of the times; if he ſtays here a week longer, notwithſtanding my expectations from him, I ſhall certainly affront him.

La. Min. I am a great favourite, but it is impoſſible much longer to act up to his very righteous ideas of things.—Isn't it pleaſant to hear him abuſe every body, and

and every thing, and yet always finiſhing with a—You'll excuſe me, couſin!—Ha, ha, ha!

Miſs Tit. What do you think the Goth ſaid to me yeſterday? One of the knots of his tie hanging down his left ſhoulder, and his fring'd cravat nicely twiſted down his breaſt and thruſt thro' his gold button-hole, which look'd exactly like my little Barbet's head in his gold collar:—"Niece Tittup, (cries he, drawing himſelf up), "I proteſt againſt this manner of conducting yourſelf, "both at home and abroad."—What are your objections, Sir John, anſwered I, a little pertly?—"Various "and manifold, (replied he), I have no time to enume-"rate particulars now; but I will venture to prophecy, "if you keep whirling round in the vortex of pantheons, "operas, feſtinos, coteries, maſquerades, and all the de-"vilades in this town, your head will be giddy, down "you will fall, loſe the name of Lucretia, and be call'd "nothing but Tittup ever after—You'll excuſe me, cou-"ſin!"—And ſo he left me.

La. Min. O the barbarian!

Enter Gymp.

Gymp. A card, your ladyſhip, from Mrs Pewitt.

La. Min. Poor Pewitt!—If ſhe can be but ſeen at public places with a woman of quality, ſhe's the happieſt of plebeians. [*Reads the card.*

"Mrs Pewitt's reſpects to Lady Minikin and Miſs Tit-"tup; hopes to have the pleaſure of attending them to "Lady Filligree's ball this evening.—Lady Daiſey ſees "maſks."—We'll certainly attend her.—Gymp, put ſome meſſage-cards upon my toilet, I'll ſend an anſwer immediately; and tell one of my footmen, that he muſt make ſome viſits for me to-day again, and ſend me a liſt of thoſe he made yeſterday: he muſt be ſure to call at lady Pettitoes; and if ſhe ſhould unluckily be at home, he muſt ſay that he came to inquire after her ſprain'd ankle.

Miſs Tit. Ay, ay, give our compliments to her ſprain'd ankle.

La. Min. That woman's ſo fat, ſhe'll never get well of it; and I am reſolv'd not to call at her door myſelf, till I am ſure of not finding her at home.—I am horridly low-ſpirited to-day; do, ſend your Colonel to play at

cheſs.

chefs with me. Since he belong'd to you, Titty, I have taken a kind of liking to him; I like every thing that loves my Titty. [*Kiſſes her.*

Miſs Tit. I know you do, my dear Lady.

[*Kiſſes her.*

La. Min. That ſneer I don't like; if ſhe ſuſpects, I ſhall hate her. [*Aſide.*]—Well, dear Titty, I'll go and write my cards, and dreſs for the maſquerade; and if that won't raiſe my ſpirits, you muſt aſſiſt me to plague my Lord a little. [*Exit.*

Miſs Tit. Yes; and I'll plague my Lady a little, or I am much miſtaken: my Lord ſhall know every tittle that has paſſed. What a poor, blind, half-witted, ſelf-conceited creature, this dear friend and relation of mine is! And what a fine ſpirited gallant ſoldier my Colonel is! My lady Minikin likes him, he likes my fortune: my Lord likes me, and I like my Lord; however, not ſo much as he imagines, or to play the fool ſo raſhly as he may expect; ſhe muſt be very ſilly indeed, who can't flutter about the flame without burning her wings.—What a great revolution in this family in the ſpace of fifteen months!—We went out of England a very aukward, regular, good Engliſh family! but half a year in France, and a winter paſſed in the warmer climate of Italy, have ripen'd our minds to every refinement of eaſe, diſſipation, and pleaſure.

Enter Colonel Tivy.

Col. Tivy. May I hope, Madam, that your humble ſervant had ſome ſhare in your laſt reverie?

Miſs Tit. How is it poſſible to have the leaſt knowledge of colonel Tivy, and not make him the principal object of one's reflections.

Col. Tivy. That man muſt have very little feeling and taſte who is not proud to have a place in the thoughts of the fineſt woman in Europe.

Miſs Tit. O fie, Colonel! [*Curtſeys and bluſhes.*

Col. Tivy. By my honour, Madam, I mean what I ſay.

Miſs Tit. By your honour, Colonel! Why will you paſs off your counters to me? Don't I know that you fine gentlemen regard no honour but that which is given

at

at the gaming-table, and which indeed ought to be the only honour you shou'd make free with.

Col. Tivy. How can you, Miss, treat me so cruelly? Have I not absolutely forsworn dice, mistress, every thing, since I dar'd to offer myself to you?

Miss Tit. Yes, Colonel; and when I dare to receive you, you may return to every thing again, and not violate the laws of the present happy matrimonial establishment.

Col. Tivy. Give me but your consent, Madam, and your life to come—

Miss Tit. Do you get my consent, Colonel, and I'll take care of my life to come.

Col. Tivy. How shall I get your consent?

Miss Tit. By getting me in the humour.

Col. Tivy. But how to get you in the humour?

Miss Tit. O, there are several ways; I am very good-natur'd.

Col. Tivy. Are you in the humour now?

Miss Tit. Try me.

Col. Tivy. How shall I?

Miss Tit. How shall I!—You a soldier, and not know the art military?—How shall I?—I'll tell you how;—When you have a subtle, treacherous, politic enemy to deal with, never stand shilly shally, and lose your time in treaties and parleys, but cock your hat, draw your sword;—march, beat drum—dub, dub, a dub—present fire, piff-pauff—'tis done!—they fly, they yield.—Victoria! victoria!— [*Running off*

Col. Tivy. Stay, stay, my dear, dear angel!

[*Bringing her back*

Miss Tit. No, no, no, I have no time to be kill'd now: besides, lady Minikin is in the vapours, and want you at chess; and my Lord is low-spirited, and wants me at picquet: my uncle is in an ill-humour, and wants me to discard you, and go with him into the country.

Col. Tivy. And will you, Miss?

Miss Tit. Will I!—No, I never do as I am bid; but you ought—so go to my Lady.

Col. Tivy. Nay, but Miss.

Miss Tit. Nay, but Colonel, if you won't obey your commanding officer, you shall be broke, and then my mai won'

won't accept of you; so march, Colonel:—look'ee, Sir, I will command before marriage, and do what I please afterwards, or I have been well educated to very little purpose. [*Exit.*

Col. Tivy. What a mad devil it is!—Now, if I had the least affection for the girl, I should be damnably vex'd at this!—But she has a fine fortune; and I must have her if I can.—Tol, lol, lol, &c. [*Exit singing.*

Enter Sir John Trotley *and* Davy.

Sir John. Hold your tongue, Davy; you talk like a fool.

Davy. It is a fine place, your honour, and I cou'd live here for ever!

Sir John. More shame for you.—Live here for ever!—What, among thieves and pick-pockets!—What a revolution since my time! the more I see, the more I've cause for lamentation. What a dreadful change has time brought about in twenty years! I should not have known the place again, nor the people; all the signs that made so noble an appearance, are all taken down.—Not a bob or tie wig to be seen! All the degrees from the parade in St James's Park, to the stool and brush at the corner of every street, have their hair tied up—the mason laying bricks, the baker with his basket, the post-boy crying newspapers, and the doctors prescribing physic, have all their hair tied up; and that's the reason so many heads are tied up every month.

Davy. I shall have my head tied up to-morrow.—Mr Wisp will do it for me ——your honour and I look like Philistines among 'em.

Sir John. And I shall break your head if it is tied up; I hate innovation.—All confusion, and no distinction!—The streets now are as smooth as a turnpike-road: no rattling and exercise in the hackney-coaches: those who ride in 'em are all fast asleep; and they have strings in their hands, that the coachman must pull to waken 'em when they are to be set down.—What luxury and abomination!

Davy. Is it so, your honour? 'feckins, I lik'd it hugely.

Sir John. But you must hate and detest London.

Davy. How can I manage that, your honour, when

there is every thing to delight my eye and cheriſh my heart?

Sir John. 'Tis all deceit and deluſion.

Davy. Such crowding, coaching, carting, and ſqueezing; ſuch a power of fine ſights, fine ſhops full of fine things; and then ſuch fine illuminations all of a row! and ſuch fine dainty ladies in the ſtreets, ſo civil and ſo graceleſs—they talk of country-girls, theſe here look more healthy and roſy by half.

Sir John. Sirrah, they are proſtitutes; and are civil to delude and deſtroy you: they are painted Jezebels; and they who hearken to 'em, like Jezebel of old, will go to the dogs: if you dare to look at 'em, you will be tainted; and if you ſpeak to 'em, you are undone.

Davy. Bleſs us, bleſs us!——How does your honour know all this?—Were they as bad in your time?

Sir John. Not by half, Davy—In my time, there was a ſort of decency in the worſt of women:—but the harlots now watch like tigers for their prey, and drag you to their dens of infamy—See, Davy, how they have torn my neckcloth. [*Shows his neckcloth.*

Davy. If you had gone civilly, your honour, they wou'd not have hurt you.

Sir John. Well, we'll get away as faſt as we can.

Davy. Not this month, I hope; for I have not had half my bellyfull yet.

Sir John. I'll knock you down, Davy, if you grow profligate: you ſhan't go out again to-night; and to-morrow keep in my room, and ſtay till I can look over my things, and ſee they don't cheat you.

Davy. Your honour then won't keep your word with me? [*Sulkily.*

Sir John. Why, what did I promiſe you?

Davy. That I ſhou'd take ſixpen'oth of one of the theatres to-night, and a ſhilling-place at the other to-morrow.

Sir John. Well, well, ſo I did: is it a moral piece, Davy?

Davy. O yes, and written by a clergyman; it is call'd the Rival Cananites, or the Tragedy of Braggadocia.

Sir John. Be a good lad, and I wont be worſe than my word;

word; there's money for you.—[*Gives him ſome.*] But come ſtraight home, for I ſhall want to go to bed.

Davy. To be ſure, your honour—As I am to go ſo ſoon, I'll make a night of it. [*Aſide, and exit.*

Sir John. This fellow wou'd turn rake and maccaroni if he was to ſtay here a week longer—Bleſs me, what dangers are in this town at every ſtep! O that I were once ſettled ſafe again at Trotley Place!——Nothing but to ſave my country ſhou'd bring me back again. My niece Lucretia is ſo be-faſhion'd and be-devill'd, that nothing, I fear, can ſave her: however, to eaſe my conſcience, I muſt try. But what can be expected from the young women of theſe times, but ſallow looks, wild ſchemes, ſaucy words, and looſe morals!—They lie a-bed all day, ſit up all night: if they are ſilent, they are gaming; and if they talk, 'tis either ſcandal or infidelity; and that they may look what they are, their heads are all feather, and round their necks are twiſted rattleſnake tippets.—O tempora, O mores!

Lord Minikin *diſcovered in his powdering gown, with* Jeſſamy *and* Mignon.

L. Min. Pry'thee, Mignon, don't plague me any more; doſt think that a nobleman's head has nothing to do but to be tortur'd all day under thy infernal fingers? give me my clothes.

Mig. Ven you loſs your monee, my Lor, you no goot humour, the devil may dreſs your cheveu for me! [*Exit.*

L Min. That fellow's an impudent raſcal, but he's a genius; ſo I muſt bear with him. Our beef and pudding enriches their blood ſo much, that the ſlaves in a month forget their miſery and ſoup-maigre. —O my head!—A chair, Jeſſamy!—I muſt abſolutely change my wine-merchant: I can't taſte his champaigne without diſordering myſelf for a week!—Heigho!— [*Sighs.*

Enter Miſs Tittup.

Miſs Tit. What makes you ſigh, my Lord?

L. Min. Becauſe you were ſo near me, child.

Miſs Tit. Indeed! I ſhou'd rather have thought my Lady had been with you—By your looks, my Lord, I am afraid Fortune jilted you laſt night?

L. Min. No, faith; our champaigne was not good

yesterday, and I am vapour'd like our English November; but one glance of my Tittup can dispel vapours like —like—

Miss Tit. Like something very fine, to be sure; but pray, keep your simile for the next time;—and hark'ee—a little prudence will not be amiss; Mr Jessamy will think you mad, and me worse. [*Half aside.*

Jes. O, pray don't mind me, Madam.

L. Min. Gadso, Jessamy, look out my domino, and I'll ring the bell when I want you.

Jes. I shall, my Lord;—Miss thinks that every body is blind in the house but herself. [*Aside, and exit.*

Miss Tit. Upon my word, my Lord, you must be a little more prudent, or we shall become the town-talk.

L. Min. And so I will, my dear; and therefore, to prevent surprise, I'll lock the door. [*Locks it.*

Miss Tit. What do you mean, my Lord?

L. Min. Prudence, child, prudence; I keep all my ewels under lock and key.

Miss Tit. You are not in possession yet, my Lord: I can't stay two minutes: I only came to tell you that lady Minikin saw us yesterday in the hackney-coach; she did not know me, I believe; she pretends to be greatly uneasy at your neglect of her; she certainly has some mischief in her head.

L. Min. No intentions, I hope, of being fond of me?

Miss Tit. No, no: make yourself easy; she hates you most unalterably.

L. Min. You have given me spirits again.

Miss Tit. Her pride is alarm'd that you should prefer any of the sex to her.

L. Min. Her pride then has been alarm'd ever since I had the honour of knowing her.

Miss Tit. But, dear my Lord, let us be merry and wise; should she ever be convinc'd that we have a *tendre* for each other, she certainly wou'd proclaim it, and then——

L. Min. We shou'd be envy'd, and we shou'd be laugh'd at, my sweet cousin.

Miss Tit. Nay, I wou'd have her mortify'd too—for tho' I love her Ladyship sincerely, I cannot say but I love a little mischief as sincerely: but then if my uncle Trotley

Trotley ſhou'd know of our affair, he is ſo old-faſhion'd, prudiſh, and out-of-the-way, he wou'd either ſtrike me out of his will, or inſiſt upon my quitting the houſe.

L. Min. My good couſin is a queer mortal, that's certain; I wiſh we could get him handſomely into the country again——He has a fine fortune to leave behind him——

Miſs Tit. But then he lives ſo regularly, and never makes uſe of a phyſician, that he may live theſe twenty years.

L. Min. What can we do with the barbarian?

Miſs Tit. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I am really in fear of him; I ſuppoſe, reading his formal books when I was in the country with him, and going ſo conſtantly to church, with my elbows ſtuck to my hips, and my toes turn'd in, has given me theſe fooliſh prejudices.

L. Min. Then you muſt affront him, or you'll never get the better of him.

[*Knocking at the door.*

Sir John. [*without.*] My Lord, my Lord, are you buſy?

[*My Lord locks the door ſoftly.*

Miſs Tit. Heav'ns! 'tis that deteſtable brute, my uncle!

L. Min. That horrid dog, my couſin!

Miſs Tit. What ſhall we do, my Lord? [*Softly.*

Sir John. [*at the door.*] Nay, my Lord, my Lord, I heard you; pray, let me ſpeak with you.

L. Min. Ho, Sir John, is it you? I beg your pardon; I'll put up my papers and open the door.

Miſs Tit. Stay, ſtay, my Lord, I wou'd not meet him now for the world; if he ſees me here alone with you, he'll rave like a madman: put me up the chimney; any where.

L. Min. [*aloud.*] I'm coming, Sir John! here, here, get behind my great chair; he ſhan't ſee you, and you may hear all: Ill be ſhort and pleaſant with him.

[*Puts her behind the chair, and opens the door.*

Enter Sir John.

[*During this ſcene, my Lord turns the chair, as Sir* John *moves, to conceal* Tittup.

Sir John. You'll excuſe me, my Lord, that I have

broken in upon you? I heard you talking pretty loud: what, have you nobody with you? what were you about, couſin?

[*Looking about.*

L. Min. A particular affair, Sir John; I always lock myſelf up to ſtudy my ſpeeches, and ſpeak 'em aloud for the ſake of the tone and action.—

Sir John. Ay, ay, 'tis the beſt way; I am ſorry I diſturb'd you;—you'll excuſe me, couſin.

L. Min. I am rather oblig'd to you, Sir John:—intenſe application to theſe things ruins my health; but one muſt do it for the ſake of the nation.

Sir John. May be ſo; and I hope the nation will be the better for't—You'll excuſe me.

L. Min. Excuſe you, Sir John! I love your frankneſs; but why won't you be franker ſtill? we have always ſomething for dinner, and you will never dine at home.

Sir John. You muſt know, my Lord, that I love to know what I eat —I hate to travel where I don't know my way; and ſince you have brought in foreign faſhions and figaries, every thing and every body are in maſquerade; your men and manners, too, are as much fritter'd and fricaſee'd, as your beef and mutton: I love a plain diſh, my Lord.

Miſs Tit. [*peeping.*] I wiſh I was out of the room, or he at the bottom of the Thames.

Sir John. But to the point.—I came, my Lord, to open my mind to you about my niece Tittup; ſhall I do it freely?

Miſs Tit. Now for it.

L. Min. The freer the better; Tittup's a fine girl, couſin, and deſerves all the kindneſs you can ſhow her.

[Lord Minikin *and* Tittup *make ſigns at each other.*

Sir John. She muſt deſerve it, tho', before ſhe ſhall have it; and I wou'd have her begin with lengthening her petticoats, covering her ſhoulders, and wearing a cap upon her head.

Miſs Tit. O, frightful! [*Aſide.*

L. Min. Don't you think a taper leg, and falling ſhoulders, and fine hair, delightful objects, Sir John?

Sir John. And therefore ought to be conceal'd; 'tis their intereſt to conceal 'em: when you take from men

the

the pleasure of imagination, there will be a scarcity of husbands;—and then taper legs, falling shoulders, and fine hair, may be had for nothing.

L. Min. Well said, Sir John! ha, ha!—Your niece shall wear a horseman's coat and jack-boots, to please you.

Sir John. You may sneer, my Lord; but for all that, I think my niece in a bad way. She must leave me and the country, forsooth, to travel and see good company and fashions! I have seem 'em too, and wish from my heart that she is not much the worse for her journey.—You'll excuse me!

L. Min. But why in a passion, Sir John?—

[*My* Lord *nods and laughs at* Miss Tittup, *who peeps from behind.*

Don't you think that my Lady and I shall be able and willing to put her into the right road?

Sir John. Zounds! my Lord, you are out of it yourself: this comes of your travelling; all the town knows how you and my Lady live together; and I must tell you—you'll excuse me!——that my niece suffers by the bargain; prudence, my Lord, is a very fine thing.

L. Min. So is a long neckcloth nicely twisted into a button-hole; but I don't choose to wear one.——You'll excuse me!

Sir John. I wish that he who first chang'd long neckcloths for such things as you wear, had the wearing of a twisted neckcloth that I wou'd give him.

L. Min. Pry'thee, baronet, don't be so horridly out of the way; prudence is a very vulgar virtue, and so incompatible with our present ease and refinement, that a prudent man of fashion is now as great a miracle as a pale woman of quality; we got rid of our *mauvais honte* at the time that we imported our neighbour's rouge and their morals.

Sir John. Did you ever hear the like? I am not surpris'd, my Lord, that you think so lightly and talk so vainly, who are so polite a husband; your lady, my cousin, is a fine woman, and brought you a fine fortune, and deserves better usage.

L. Min. Will you have her, Sir John? She is very much at your service.

Sir John. Profligate!—What did you marry her for, my Lord?

L. Min. Convenience!—Marriage is not now-a-days an affair of inclination, but convenience; and they who marry for love, and such old-fashion'd stuff, are to me as ridiculous as those that advertise for an agreeable companion in a post-chaise.

Sir John. I have done, my Lord; Miss Tittup shall either return with me into the country, or not a penny shall she have from Sir John Trotley, baronet.

[*Whistles and walks about.*

Miss Tit. I am frighten'd out of my wits!

[Lord Minikin *sings, and sits down.*

Sir John. Pray, my Lord, what husband is this you have got for her?

L. Min. A friend of mine; a man of wit, and a fine gentleman.

Sir John. May be so; and yet make a damn'd husband for all that.—You'll excuse me!—What estate has he, pray?

L. Min. He's a colonel: his elder brother, Sir Tantivy, will certainly break his neck; and then my friend will be a happy man.

Sir John. Here's morals!—A happy man when his brother has broke his neck!—a happy man—Mercy on me!

L. Min. Why, he'll have six thousand a-year, Sir John—

Sir John. I don't care what he'll have, nor I don't care what he is, nor who my niece marries; she is a fine lady, and let her have a fine gentleman; I shan't hinder her: I'll away into the country to-morrow, and leave you to your fine doings; I have no relish for 'em, not I; I can't live among you, nor eat with you, nor game with you; I hate cards and dice; I will neither rob nor be robb'd; I am contented with what I have, and am very happy, my Lord, though my brother has not broke his neck.—You'll excuse me! [*Exit.*

L. Min. Ha, ha, ha! Come, fox, come out of your hole! Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Tit. Indeed, my Lord, you have undone me; not a foot shall I have of Trotley Manor, that's positive!

—But

—But no matter, there's no danger of his breaking his neck, ſo I'll e'en make myſelf happy with what I have, and behave to him for the future as if he was a poor relation.

L. Min. [*kneeling, ſnatching her hand, and kiſſing it.*] I muſt kneel and adore you for your ſpirit; my ſweet, heavenly Lucretia!

Re-enter Sir John.

Sir John. One thing I had forgot. [*Starts.*

Miſs Tit. Ha! he's here again.

Sir John. Why, what the devil!—heigho! my niece Lucretia, and my virtuous Lord, ſtudying ſpeeches for the good of the nation!—Yes, yes, you have been making fine ſpeeches, indeed, my Lord; and your arguments have prevail'd, I ſee. I beg your pardon! I did not mean to interrupt your ſtudies.—You'll excuſe me, my Lord!

L. Min. [*ſmiling, and mocking him.*] You'll excuſe me, Sir John!

Sir John. O yes, my Lord; but I'm afraid the devil won't excuſe you at the proper time.—Miſs Lucretia, how do you, child? You are to be married ſoon—I wiſh the gentleman joy, Miſs Lucretia; he is a happy man, to be ſure, and will want nothing but the breaking of his brother's neck to be completely ſo.

Miſs Tit. Upon my word, uncle, you are always putting bad conſtructions upon things; my Lord has been ſoliciting me to marry his friend—and having that moment extorted a conſent from me—he was thanking and wiſhing me joy—in his fooliſh manner. [*Heſitating.*

Sir John. Is that all! But how came you here, child?—did you fly down the chimney, or in at the window? for I don't remember ſeeing you when I was here before.

Miſs Tit. How can you talk ſo, Sir John?——You really confound me with your ſuſpicions;—and then you aſk ſo many queſtions, and I have ſo many things to do, that—that—upon my word, if I don't make haſte, I ſhan't get my dreſs ready for the ball; ſo I muſt run.—You'll excuſe me, uncle! [*Exit running.*

Sir John. A fine hopeful young lady that, my Lord!

L. Min. She's well-bred, and has wit.

Sir

Sir John. She has wit and breeding enough to laugh at her relations, and beſtow favours on your Lordſhip: but I muſt tell you plainly, my Lord—you'll excuſe me—that your marrying your Lady, my couſin, to uſe her ill; and ſending for my niece, your couſin, to debauch her—

L. Min. You're warm, Sir John, and don't know the world, and I never contend with ignorance and paſſion; live with me ſome time, and you'll be ſatisfied of my honour and good intentions to you and your family; in the mean time command my houſe.—I muſt attend immediately Lady Filligree's maſquerade; and I am ſorry you won't make one with us. Here, Jeſſamy, give me my domino, and call a chair; and don't let my uncle want for any thing. You'll excuſe me, Sir John; tol, lol, derol, &c. [*Exit ſinging.*

Sir John. The world's at an end! Here's fine work, here are precious doings! This lord is a pillar of the ſtate too; no wonder that the building is in danger with ſuch rotten ſupporters!—Heighho!—And then my poor lady Minikin, what a friend and huſband ſhe is bleſs'd with!—Let me conſider:—Shou'd I tell the good woman of theſe pranks, I may only make more miſchief, and mayhap go near to kill her; for ſhe's as tender as ſhe's virtuous—Poor lady! I'll e'en go and comfort her directly; endeavour to draw her from the wickedneſs of this town into the country, where ſhe ſhall have reading, fowling, and fiſhing, to keep up her ſpirits; and when I die, I will leave her that part of my fortune with which I intended to reward the virtues of Miſs Lucretia Tittup, with a plague to her! [*Exit.*

Lady Minikin's *Apartments.*

Lady Minikin *and* Colonel Tivy *diſcovered.*

La. Min. Don't urge it, Colonel; I can't think of coming home from the maſquerade this evening; tho' I ſhou'd paſs for my niece, it wou'd make an uproar among the ſervants, and perhaps from the miſtake break off your match with Tittup.

Col Tivy. My dear Lady Minikin, you know my marriage with your niece is only a ſecondary conſideration; my firſt and principal object is you—you, Madam!—— Therefore, my dear Lady, give me your promiſe to leave

the

the ball with me; you muſt, lady Minikin: a bold young fellow and a ſoldier as I am, ought not to be kept from plunder when the town has capitulated.

La. Min. But it has not capitulated, and pehaps never will; however, Colonel, ſince you are ſo furious, I muſt come to terms, I think—Keep your eyes upon me at the ball, I think I may expect that; and when I drop my handkerchief, 'tis your ſignal for purſuing; I ſhall get home as faſt as I can, you may follow me as faſt as you can; my Lord and Tittup will be otherwiſe employ'd; Gymp will let us in the back way—No, no; my heart miſgives me!

Col. Tivy. Then I am miſerable!

La. Min. Nay, rather than you ſhould be miſerable, Colonel, I will indulge your martial ſpirit: meet me in the field; there's my gauntlet. [*Throws down her glove.*

Col. Tivy, [*ſeizing it.*] Thus I accept your ſweet challenge; and if I fail you, may I hereafter, both in love and war, be branded with the name of coward.

[*Kneels and kiſſes her hand.*

Enter Sir John, *opening the door.*

Sir John. May I preſume, couſin?

La. Min. Ha! [*Squalls.*

Sir John. Mercy upon us, what are we at now!

[*Looks aſtoniſhed.*

La. Min. How can you be ſo rude, Sir John, to come into a lady's room without firſt knocking at the door? you have frighten'd me out of my wits!

Sir John. I am ſure you have frighten'd me out of mine!

Col. Tivy. Such rudeneſs deſerves death!

Sir John. Death indeed! for I ſhall never recover myſelf again! All pigs of the ſame ſtye! All ſtudying for the good of the nation!

La. Min. We muſt ſoothe him, and not provoke him.

[*Half aſide to the* Colonel.

Col. Tivy. I wou'd cut his throat if you'd permit me.

[*Aſide to* Lady Minikin.

Sir John. The devil has got his hoof into the houſe, and has corrupted the whole family; I'll get out of it as faſt as I can, leſt he ſhou'd lay hold of me too.

[*Going.*

La.

La. Min. Sir John, I muſt inſiſt upon your not going away in a miſtake.

Sir John. No miſtake, my Lady; I am thoroughly convinced—Mercy on me!

La. Min. I muſt beg you, Sir John, not to make any wrong conſtructions upon this accident; you muſt know, that the moment you was at the door—I had promis'd the Colonel no longer to be his enemy in his deſigns upon Miſs Tittup—this threw him into ſuch a rapture—that upon my promiſing my intereſt with you—and wiſhing him joy—he fell upon his knees, and—and—[*laughing.*] Ha, ha, ha!

Col. Tivy. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes, I fell upon my knees, and—and—

Sir John. Ay, ay, fell upon your knees, and—and—Ha, ha! a very good joke, faith; and the beſt of it is, that they are wiſhing joy all over the houſe upon the ſame occaſion; and my Lord is wiſhing joy; and I wiſh him joy, and you, with all my heart.

La. Min. Upon my word, Sir John, your cruel ſuſpicions affect me ſtrongly; and tho' my reſentment is curb'd by my regard, my tears cannot be reſtrain'd; 'tis the only reſource my innocence has left. [*Exit crying.*

Col. Tivy. I reverence you, Sir, as a relation to that lady; but as her ſlanderer, I deteſt you: her tears muſt be dried, and my honour ſatisfied: you know what I mean; take your choice;—time, place, ſword, or piſtol; conſider it calmly, and determine as you pleaſe. I am a ſoldier, Sir John. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Very fine, truly! and ſo between the crocodile and the bully, my throat is to be cut! They are guilty of all ſort of iniquity; and when they are diſcover'd, no humility and repentance;—the ladies have reſource to their tongues or their tears, and the gallants to their ſwords.——That I may not be drawn in by the one, or drawn upon by the other, I'll hurry into the country while I retain my ſenſes and can ſleep in a whole ſkin. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Enter Sir JOHN *and* JESSAMY.

Sir JOHN.

THERE is no bearing this! What a land are we in! Upon my word, Mr Jeſſamy, you ſhould look well to the houſe, there are certainly rogues about it: for I did but croſs the way juſt now to the pamphlet-ſhop, to buy *A Touch of the Times*, and they have taken my hanger from my ſide; ay, and had a pluck at my watch too; but I heard of their tricks, and had it ſow'd to my pocket.

Jeſ. Don't be alarm'd, Sir John; 'tis a very common thing; and if you will walk the ſtreets without convoy, you will be pick'd up by privateers of all kinds: Ha, ha!

Sir John. Not be alarm'd when I am robb'd!—Why, they might have cut my throat with my own hanger; I ſhan't ſleep a wink all night: ſo pray lend me ſome weapon of defence; for I am ſure, if they attack me in the open ſtreet, they'll be with me at night again.

Jeſ. I'll lend you my own ſword, Sir John; but be aſſur'd there's no danger: there's robbing and murder cry'd every night under my window, but it no more diſturbs me than the ticking of my watch at my bed's head.

Sir John. Well, well, be that as it will, I muſt be upon my guard. What a dreadful place this is! But 'tis all owing to the corruption of the times: the great folks game, and poor folks rob, no wonder that murder enſues; ſad, ſad, ſad!—Well, let me but get over this night, and I'll leave this den of thieves to-morrow. How long will your lord and lady ſtay at this maſking and mummery before they come home?

Jeſ. 'Tis impoſſible to ſay the time, Sir; that merely depends upon the ſpirit of the company and the nature of the entertainment: for my own part, I generally make it myſelf till four or five in the morning.

Sir John. Why, what the devil, do you make one at theſe maſqueradings?

Jeſ. I ſeldom miſs, Sir: I may venture to ſay, that no-

nobody knows the trim and ſmall talk of the place better than I do; I was always reckon'd an incomparable maſk.

Sir John. Thou art an incomparable coxcomb, I am ſure. [*Aſide.*

Jeſ. An odd ridiculous accident happen'd to me at a maſquerade three years ago; I was in tip-top ſpirits, and had drank a little too freely of the Champaigne, I believe.

Sir John. You'll be hang'd, I believe. [*Aſide.*

Jeſ. Wit flew about; in ſhort, I was in ſpirits. At laſt, from drinking and rattling, to vary the pleaſure, we went to dancing: and who do you think I danc'd a minuet with? he, he! pray gueſs, Sir, John?

Sir John. Danc'd a minuet with! [*Half aſide.*

Jeſ. My own lady, that's all: the eyes of the whole aſſembly were upon us; my Lady dances well, and I believe I am pretty tolerable: after the dance, I was running into a little coquetry and ſmall talk with her.

Sir John. With your lady?—Chaos is come again! [*Aſide.*

Jeſ. With my lady—but upon my turning my hand thus—[*conceitedly*] egad, ſhe caught me; whiſper'd me who I was. I wou'd fain have laugh'd her out of it, but it wou'd not do.—No, no, Jeſſamy, ſays ſhe, I am not to be deceiv'd: pray, wear gloves for the future; for you may as well go bare-fac'd as ſhow that hand and diamond-ring.

Sir John. What a ſink of iniquity!—Proſtitution on all ſides, from the lord to the pick-pocket. [*Aſide.*] Pray, Mr Jeſſamy, among your other virtues, I ſuppoſe you game a little, eh, Mr Jeſſamy?

Jeſ. A little whiſt, or ſo.—But I am tied up from the dice; I muſt never touch a box again.

Sir John. I wiſh you was tied up ſomewhere elſe; I ſweat from top to toe! [*Aſide.*]—Pray lend me your ſword, Mr Jeſſamy; I ſhall go to my room. And let my Lord and Lady, and my niece Tittup know, that I beg they will excuſe ceremonies; that I muſt be up and gone before they go to bed; that I have a moſt profound reſpect and love for them; and—that I hope we ſhall never ſee one another again as long as we live.

Jeſ.

Jef. I ſhall certainly obey your commands. What poor ignorant wretches theſe country gentlemen are!

[*Aſide, and exit.*

Sir John. If I ſtay in this place another day, it wou'd throw me into a fever! Oh, I wiſh it was morning!—This comes of viſiting my relations!

Enter Davy, *drunk.*

So, you wicked wretch you—where have you been, and what have you been doing?

Davy. Merry-making, your honour——London for ever!

Sir John. Did not I order you to come directly from the play, and not be idling and raking about?

Davy. Servants don't do what they are bid in London.

Sir John. And did I not order you not to make a jackanapes of yourſelf, and tie your hair up like a monkey?—

Davy. And therefore I did it—no pleaſing the ladies without this—my Lord's ſervants call you an old out-of-faſhion'd codger, and have taught me what's what.

Sir John. Here's an imp of the devil!——He is undone, and will poiſon the whole country.—Sirrah, get every thing ready, I'll be going directly.

Davy. To bed, Sir?—I want to go to bed myſelf, Sir.

Sir John. Why, how now——you are drunk too, Sirrah.

Davy. I am a little, your honour, becauſe I have been drinking.

Sir John. That is not all—you have been in bad company, Sirrah!

Davy. Indeed your honour's miſtaken, I never kept ſuch good company in all my life.

Sir John. The fellow does not underſtand me—Where have you been, you drunkard?

Davy. Drinking, to be ſure, if I am a drunkard; and if you had been drinking too, as I have been, you wou'd not be in ſuch a paſſion with a body—it makes one ſo good-natur'd—

Sir John. This is another addition to my misfortunes!

I shall have this fellow carry into the country as many vices as will corrupt the whole parish.

Davy. I'll take what I can, to be sure, your Worship.

Sir John. Get away, you beast you, and sleep off the debauchery you have contracted this fortnight, or I shall leave you behind as a proper person to make one of his Lordship's family.

Davy. So much the better—Give me more wages, less work, and the key of the ale-cellar, and I am your servant; if not, provide yourself with another.

[*Struts about.*

Sir John. Here's a reprobate!—This is the completion of my misery!—But harkee, villain—go to bed—and sleep off your iniquity; and then pack up the things, or I'll pack you off to Newgate, and transport you for life. [*Exit.*

Davy. That for you, old codger—[*Snaps his fingers.*] I know the law better than to be frighten'd with moonshine! I wish that I was to live here all my days!—— This is life indeed! a servant lives up to his eyes in clover; they have wages, and board-wages, and nothing to do but to grow fat and saucy—They are as happy as their master: they play for ever at cards, swear like emperors, drink like fishes, and go a-wenching with as much ease and traquillity as if they were going to a sermon! Oh, 'tis a fine life! [*Exit reeling.*

SCENE, *A Chamber in* Lord Minikin's *house.*

Enter Lord Minikin *and* Miss Tittup, *in masquerade dresses, lighted by* Jessamy.

L. Min. Set down the candles, Jessamy; and shou'd your lady come home, let me know—Be sure you are not out of the way.

Jes. I have liv'd too long with your Lordship to need the caution—Who the devil have we got now? but that's my Lord's business, and not mine. [*Exit.*

Miss Tit. [*pulling off her mask.*] Upon my word, my Lord, this coming home so soon from the masquerade is very imprudent, and will certainly be observ'd.—I am most inconceivably frighten'd, I can assure you——my uncle Trotley has a light in his room; the accident this morning will certainly keep him upon the watch—pray, my

my Lord, let us defer our meetings till he goes into the country.—I find that my Engliſh heart, tho' it has ventur'd ſo far, grows fearful, and aukward to practiſe the freedoms of warmer climates—[*My Lord takes her by the hand.*] If you will not deſiſt, my Lord—we are ſeparated for ever—The ſight of the precipice turns my head; I have been giddy with it too long, and muſt turn from it while I can.—Pray be quiet, my Lord, I will meet you to-morrow.

L. Min. To-morrow! 'tis an age in my ſituation.—Let the weak, baſhful, coyiſh whiner be intimidated with theſe faint alarms; but let the bold experienced lover kindle at the danger, and like the eagle in the midſt of ſtorms thus bounce upon his prey. [*Takes hold of her.*

Miſs Tit. Dear Mr Eagle, be merciful; pray, let the poor Pigeon fly for this once.

L. Min. If I do, my Dove, may I be curs'd to have my wife as fond of me as I am now of thee.

[*Offers to kiſs her.*

Jeſ. [*without, knocking at the door.*] My Lord, my Lord!—

Miſs Tit. [*ſcreams.*] Ha!

L. Min. Who's there?

Jeſ. [*peeping.*] 'Tis I, my Lord; may I come in?

L. Min. Damn the fellow! What's the matter?

Jeſ. Nay, not much, my Lord—only my Lady's come home.

Miſs Tit. Then I'm undone—What ſhall I do?—I'll run into my own room.

L. Min. Then ſhe may meet you going to her's.

Jeſ. There's a dark, deep cloſet, my Lord—Miſs may hide herſelf there.

Miſs Tit. For heaven's ſake, put me into it; and when her Ladyſhip's ſafe, let me know, my Lord.—What an eſcape have I had!

L. Min. The moment her evil ſpirit is laid, I'll let my angel out. [*Puts her into the cloſet.*] Lock the door on the inſide—Come ſoftly to my room, Jeſſamy—

Jeſ. If a board creaks, your Lordſhip ſhall never give me a lac'd waiſtcoat again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Gymp, *lighting in* Lady Minikin *and* Colonel Tivy, *in maſquerade-dreſſes.*

Gymp. Pray, my Lady, go no farther with the Colonel: I know you mean nothing but innocence; but I'm ſure there will be bloodſhed, for my Lord is certainly in the houſe—I'll take my affidavit that I heard—

Col. Tivy. It can't be, I tell you; we left him this moment at the maſquerade——I ſpoke to him before I came out.

La. Min. He's too buſy and too well employ'd to think of home—But don't tremble ſo, Gymp. There is no harm, I aſſure you.—The Colonel is to marry my niece, and it is proper to ſettle ſome matters relating to it.—They are left to us.

Gymp. Yes, yes, Madam; to be ſure it is proper that you talk together—I know you mean nothing but innocence—but indeed there will be bloodſhed.

Col. Tivy. The girl's a fool. I have no ſword by my ſide.

Gymp. But my Lord has, and you may kill one another with that.—I know you mean nothing but innocence; but I certainly heard him go up the back-ſtairs into his room talking with Jeſſamy.

La. Min. 'Tis impoſſible but the girl muſt have fancy'd this——Can't you aſk Whiſp, or Mignon, if their maſter is come in!

Gymp. Lord, my Lady, they are always drunk before this, and aſleep in the kitchen.

La. Min. This frighten'd fool has made me as ridiculous as herſelf. Hark!—Colonel, I'll ſwear there is ſomething upon the ſtairs; now I am in the field, I find I am a coward.

Gymp. There will certainly be bloodſhed.

Col. Tivy. I'll ſlip down with Gymp this back-way then. [*Going.*

Gymp. O my dear Lady, there is ſomebody coming up there too.

Col. Tivy. Zounds! I've got between to fires.

La. Min. Run into the cloſet.

Col. Tivy. [*runs to the cloſet.*] There's no retreat—the door is lock'd.

L. Min. Behind the chimney-board, Gymp.

Col.

Col. Tivy. I ſhall certainly be taken priſoner; [*Goes behind the board.*] You'll let me know when the enemy's decamp'd.

La. Min. Leave that to me——Do you, Gymp, go down the back-ſtairs, and leave me to face my Lord; I think I can match him at hypocriſy. [*Sits down.*

Enter Lord Minikin.

L. Min. What, is your Ladyſhip ſo ſoon return'd from lady Fillagree's?

La. Min. I am ſure, my Lord, I ought to be more ſurpris'd at your being here ſo ſoon, when I ſaw you ſo well entertain'd in a *tete-a-tete* with a lady in crimſon—Such ſights, my Lord, will always drive me from my moſt favourite amuſements.

L. Min. You find, at leaſt, that the lady, whoever ſhe was, cou'd not engage me to ſtay, when I found your Ladyſhip had left the ball.

La. Min. Your Lordſhip's ſneering upon my unhappy temper may be a proof of your wit, but is none of your humanity; and this behaviour is as great an inſult upon me as even your falſehood itſelf.

[*Pretends to weep.*

L. Min. Nay, my dear lady Minikin, if you are reſolv'd to play tragedy, I ſhall roar away too, and pull out my cambrick handkerchief.

La. Min. I think, my Lord, we had better retire to our apartments; my weakneſs and your brutality will only expoſe us to our ſervants.——Where is Tittup, pray?—

L. Min. I left her with the Colonel.—A maſquerade to young folks upon the point of matrimony is as delightful as it is diſguſting to thoſe who are happily married, and are wiſe enough to love home and the company of their wives. [*Takes hold of her hand.*

La. Min. Falſe man!—I had as lieve a toad touch'd me. [*Aſide.*

L. Min. She gives me the friſonne.—I muſt propoſe to ſtay, or I ſhall never get rid of her. [*Aſide.*]—I am quite aguiſh to-night,—he—he—Do, my dear, let us make a little fire here, and make a family *tete-a-tete*, by way of novelty. [*Rings a bell.*

Enter

Enter Jeſſamy.

Let 'em take away that chimney-board, and light a fire here immediately.

La. Min. What ſhall I do! [*Aſide.*]—Here, Jeſſamy, there is no occaſion—I am going to my own chamber, and my Lord won't ſtay here by himſelf.

[*Exit* Jeſſamy.

L. Min. How cruel is it, lady Minikin, to deprive me of the pleaſure of a domeſtic duetto.—A good eſcape, faith! [*Aſide.*

La. Min. I have too much regard for lord Minikin, to agree to any thing that would afford him ſo little pleaſure—I ſhall retire to my own apartment.

L. Min. Well, if your Ladyſhip will be cruel, I muſt ſtill, like the miſer, ſtarve and ſigh, tho' poſſeſſed of the greateſt treaſure.—[*Bows.*]—I wiſh your Ladyſhip a good night—

[*He takes one candle, and ſhe takes the other.*

May I preſume— [*Salutes her.*

La. Min. Your Lordſhip is too obliging.——Naſty man! [*Aſide.*

L. Min. Diſagreeable woman! [*Aſide.*

[*They wipe their lips, and exeunt ceremoniouſly.*

Miſs Tit. [*peeping out at the cloſet.*] All's ſilent now, and quite dark; what has been doing here I cannot gueſs—I long to be reliev'd, I wiſh my Lord was come—But I hear a noiſe. [*She ſhuts the door.*

Col. Tivy. [*peeping over the chimney-board.*] I wonder my Lady does not come.——I would not have Miſs Tittup know of this—'twou'd be ten thouſand pounds out of my way, and I can't afford to give ſo much for a little gallantry.

Miſs Tit. [*comes forward.*] What would my Colonel ſay to find his bride, that is to be, in this critical ſituation.

Enter Lord Minikin, *at one door, in the dark.*

L. Min. Now to relieve my priſoner.

[*Comes forward.*

Enter Lady Minikin, *at the other door.*

La. Min. My poor Colonel will be as miſerable as if he were beſieg'd in garriſon; I muſt releaſe him.

[*Going towards the chimney.*

L.

L. Min. Hiſt—hiſt!—

Miſs Tit. La. Min. and Col. Tivy. Here, here!—

L. Min. This way.

La. Min. Softly.

[*They all grope about, till* Lord Minikin *has got* Lady Minikin, *and the* Colonel Miſs Tittup.

Sir John. [*ſpeaking without.*] Light this way, I ſay; I am ſure there are thieves, get a blunderbuſs.

Jeſ. Indeed you dreamt it; there is nobody but the family. [*All ſtand and ſtare.*

Enter Sir John *in his cap, and hanger drawn, with* Jeſſamy.

Sir John. Give me the candle, I'll ferret 'em out, I warrant; bring a blunderbuſs, I ſay; they have been ſkipping about that gallery in the dark this half hour; there muſt be miſchief——I have watch'd 'em into this room——Ho, ho, are you there?—If you ſtir, you are dead men—[*They retire.*]—and [*ſeeing the ladies*] women too!——Egad—ha! What's this? the ſame party again! and two couple they are of as choice mortals as ever were hatch'd in this righteous town.—You'll excuſe me, couſins! [*They all look confounded.*

L. Min. In the name of wonder, how comes all this about?

Sir John. Well, but hark'ee, my dear couſins, have you not got wrong partners?—Here has been ſome miſtake in the dark; I am mighty glad that I have brought you a candle to ſet you all to rights again.—You'll excuſe me, gentlemen and ladies!

Enter Gymp, *with a candle.*

Gymp. What, in the name of mercy, is the matter?

Sir John. Why the old matter, and the old game, Mrs Gymp; and I'll match my couſins here at it againſt all the world; and I ſay done firſt.

L. Min. What is the meaning, Sir John, of all this tumult and conſternation? May not Lady Minikin and I, and the Colonel and your niece, be ſeen in my houſe together without your raiſing the family, and making this uproar and confuſion?

Sir John. Come, come, good folks, I ſee you are all confounded; I'll ſettle this matter in a moment.—As for you,

you, Colonel—tho' you have not deserv'd plain-dealing from me, I will now be serious—you may imagine this young lady has an independent fortune, besides expectations from me—'tis a mistake, she has no expectations from me; if she marry you, and I don't consent to her marriage, she will have no fortune at all.

Col. Tivy. Plain-dealing is a jewel; and to show you, Sir John, that I can pay you in kind, I am most sincerely oblig'd to you for your intelligence; and I am, ladies, your most obedient humble servant—I shall see you, my Lord, at the club to-morrow?— [*Exit* Col. Tivy.

L. Min. Sans doute, mon cher Colonel.—I'll meet you there without fail.

Sir John. My Lord, you'll have something else to do.

L. Min. Indeed! what is that, good Sir John?

Sir John. You must meet your lawyers and creditors to-morrow, and be told, what you have always turn'd a deaf ear to, that the dissipation of your fortune and morals must be followed by years of parsimony and repentance.—As you are fond of going abroad, you may indulge that inclination without having it in your power to indulge any other.

L. Min. The bumkin is no fool, and is damn'd satirical— [*Aside.*

Sir John. This kind of quarantine for pestilential minds, will bring you to your senses, and make you renounce foreign vices and follies, and return with joy to your country and property again.—Read that, my Lord, and know your fate. [*Gives a paper.*

L. Min. What an abomination this is! that a man of fashion, and a nobleman, should be oblig'd to submit to the laws of his country.

Sir John. Thank heaven, my Lord, we are in that country!—You are silent, ladies?—If repentance has subdu'd your tongues, I shall have hopes of you—a little country air might perhaps do well—as you are distress'd, I am at your service.—What say you, my Lady?

L. Min. However appearances have condemn'd me, give me leave to disavow the substance of those appearances. My mind has been tainted, but not profligate—

your

your kindneſs and example may reſtore me to my former natural Engliſh conſtitution.

Sir John. Will you reſign your lady to me, my Lord, for a time?

L. Min. For ever, dear Sir John, without a murmur.

Sir John. Well, Miſs, and what ſay you?

Miſs Tit. Guilty, uncle. [*Curtſeying.*

Sir John. Guilty! the devil you are? of what?

Miſs Tit. Of conſenting to marry one whom my heart could not approve; and coquetting with another, which friendſhip, duty, honour, morals, and every thing but faſhion, ought to have forbidden.

Sir John. Thus then, with the wife of one under this arm, and the miſtreſs of another under this, I ſally forth a knight-errant, to reſcue diſtreſs'd damſels from thoſe monſters, foreign vices and *bon ton*, as they call it; and I truſt that every Engliſh hand and heart here will aſſiſt me in ſo deſperate an undertaking.—You'll excuſe me, Sirs!

COMUS.

COMUS:

A

MASQUE.

Altered from MILTON.

IN TWO ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

	Covent-Garden.	*Edinburgh*, 1778.
Comus,	Mr Mattocks.	Mr Davies.
First Spirit,	Mr Hull.	Mr Sparks.
Elder Brother,	Mr Whitefield.	Mr Simpson.
Younger Brother,	Mr Robson.	Mr Banks.
Bacchanals,	Mr Reinhold.	Mr Hallion.
	Mr Mahon, &c.	Mr Kelly, &c.
Second Spirit,	Mr L'Estrange.	

WOMEN.

Lady,	Mrs Jackson.	Mrs Woods.
Euphrosyne,	Miss Catley.	Mrs Jackson.
Bacchants,	Miss Dayes.	Mrs Mills.
	Miss Ambrose, &c.	Mrs Mountf. &c.
Sabrina and Pastoral Nymph,	Miss Brown.	Mrs Henderson.

ACT I.

SCENE, *A Wood.*

COMUS *enters with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a route of men and women, dressed as Bacchanals: they come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.*

COMUS *speaks.*

THE star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold,

And

And the gilded car of day
His golden axle doth allay
In the ſteep Atlantic ſtream;
And the ſlope ſun his upward beam
Shoots againſt the duſky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the eaſt:
Meanwhile welcome joy and feaſt.

SONG.

Now Phœbus ſinketh in the weſt.
Welcome ſong, and welcome jeſt,
Midnight-ſhout and revelry,
Tipſy dance and jollity;
Braid your locks with roſy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed,
And Advice with ſcrup'lous head,
Strict Age and ſour Severity,
With their grave ſaws in ſlumber lie.

Comus. We that are of purer fire,
Imitate the ſtarry choir,
Who in their nightly watchful ſpheres
Lead in ſwift round the months and years.
The ſounds and ſeas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wav'ring morrice move;
And on the tawny ſands and ſhelves
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.

SONG. *By a Woman.*

By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
The wood-nymph, deck'd with daiſies trim,
Their merry wakes and paſtimes keep:
What has night to do with ſleep?
Night has better ſweets to prove;
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love:
Come, let us our rites begin:
'Tis only day-light that makes ſin.

Comus. Hail, goddeſs of nocturnal ſport,
Dark-veil'd Cocytto, t' whom the ſecret flame
Of midnight-torches burns; myſterious dame,

That ne'er art call'd but when the dragon-womb
Of Stygian darkneſs ſpits her thickeſt gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air,
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'ſt with Hecat', and befriend
Us thy vow'd prieſts, till utmoſt end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
Ere the blabbing eaſtern ſcout,
The nice Morn on th' Indian ſteep
From her cabin loop-hole peep,
And to the tell-tale Sun deſcry
Our conceal'd ſolemnity.

SONG. *By* Comus *and a Woman.*

From tyrant laws and cuſtoms free,
We follow ſweet variety;
By turns we drink, and dance, and ſing,
Love for ever on the wing.
Why ſhould niggard rules controul
Tranſports of the jovial ſoul?
No dull ſtinting hour we own:
Pleaſure counts our time alone.

Comus. Break off, break off, I feel the diff'rent pace
Of ſome chaſte footing near about this ground.
Run to your ſhrouds, within theſe brakes and trees;
Our number may affright: ſome virgin ſure
(Far ſo I can diſtinguiſh by mine art)
Benighted in theſe woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains. I ſhall ere long
Be well ſtock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling ſpells into the ſpungy air,
Of pow'r to cheat the eye with blear illuſion,
And give it falſe preſentments, leſt the place
And my quaint habits breed aſtoniſhment,
And put the damſel to ſuſpicious flight;
Which muſt not be, for that's againſt my courſe.
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well-plac'd words of glozing courteſy,
Baited with reaſons not unplauſible,
Wind me into the eaſy-hearted man,
And hug him into ſnares. When once her eye

Hath

Hath met the virtue of this magic duſt,
I ſhall appear ſome harmleſs villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here ſhe comes; I fairly ſtep aſide,
And hearken if I may her buſineſs hear.

Enter the Lady.

Lady. This way the noiſe was, if mine ear be true,
My beſt guide now; methought it was the ſound
Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,
I ſhould be loth
To meet the rudeneſs and ſwill'd inſolence
Of ſuch late rioters; yet, oh, where elſe
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?

Comus. [*Aſide.*] I'll eaſe her of that care, and be her guide.

Lady. My brothers, when they ſaw me weary'd out,
Stepp'd, as they ſaid, to the next thicket ſide,
To bring me berries of ſuch cooling fruit
As the kind hoſpitable woods provide.
But where they are, and why they come not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likelieſt
They had engag'd their wand'ring ſteps too far.
I cannot halloo to my brothers, but
Such noiſe as I can make to be heard fartheſt
I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd ſpirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

S O N G.

Sweet Echo, ſweeteſt nymph, that liv'ſt unſeen
Within thy airy cell,
By ſlow Mæander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her ſad ſong mourneth well,
Canſt thou not tell me of a gentle pair,
That likeſt thy Narciſſus are?
Oh, if thou have
Hid them in ſome flow'ry cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the ſphere;
So may'ſt thou be tranſlated to the ſkies,
And give reſounding grace to all heaven's harmonies.

Comus, [*aside.*] Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen.——Hail, foreign wonder,
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan or Silvan, by blest'd song
Forbidding ev'ry bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosp'rous growth of this tall wood.

Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise
That is address'd to unattending ears:
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Comus. What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lady. Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth.

Comus. Could that divide you from near-ush'ring guides?

Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf,
To seek i'th'valley some cool friendly spring.

Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, lady?

Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.

Comus. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

Lady. No less than if I should my brothers lose.

Comus. Were they of manly prime or youthful bloom?

Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.

Comus. Two such I saw, under a mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human: if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to heav'n,
To help you find them.

Lady. Gentler villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place?

Comus. I know each lane, and ev'ry alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood:
And if your stray attendance be yet lodg'd,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know

Ere

Ere morrow wake; or grant it otherwise,
I can conduct you, lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till farther quest.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy offer'd service. In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, bless'd Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion'd strength——Shepherd, lead on.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Comus's *Crew from behind the trees.*

SONG. *By a Man.*

Fly swiftly, ye minutes, till Comus receive
The nameless soft transports that beauty can give;
The bowl's frolic joys let him teach her to prove,
And she in return yield the raptures of love.
Without love and wine, wit and beauty are vain,
All grandeur insipid, and riches a pain;
The most splendid palace grows dark as the grave:
Love and wine give, ye gods! or take back what you gave.

CHORUS.

Away, away, away,
To Comus' court repair;
There night outshines the day,
There yields the melting fair.

[*A halloo heard.*

Enter the two Brothers.

E. Bro. ——List, list; I hear
Some far-off halloo break the silent air.

Y. Bro. Methought so too: what should it be?

E. Bro. Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour woodman; or at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

Y. Bro. Heav'n keep my sister. Again! again! and near!
Best draw and stand upon our guard.

E. Bro. I'll halloo;
If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and heav'n be for us.

Enter the first Spirit, *habited like a shepherd.*

Y. Bro. That halloo I should know—What are you? Speak.

Spir. What voice is that? My young lord? Speak again.

Y. Bro. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.

Spir. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy:
Where is my virgin lady? where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?

E. Bro. To tell thee sadly, shepherd, without blame,
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

Spir. Ah, me! unhappy! then my fears are true.

E. Bro. What fears, good Thyrsis? prithee briefly shew.

Spir. Within the bosom of this hideous wood,
Immur'd in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus;
Deep-skill'd in all his mother's witcheries,
And wanton as his father.
This have I learnt tending my flock hard by;
Whence night by night he and his monstrous route are heard to howl.
Yet have they many baits and guileful spells,
T' inveigle and invite th' unwary sense.
But hark! the beaten timbrel's jarring sound
And wild tumultuous mirth proclaim their presence:
Onward they move; and this way guides their steps.
Let us withdraw a while. [*They retire.*

Enter Comus's *Crew revelling, and by turns caressing each other, till they observe the two* Brothers; *then the Elder* Brother *advances and speaks.*

E. Bro. What are you? speak! that thus in wanton riot
And midnight revelry, like drunken Bacchanals,
Invade the silence of these lonely shades?

1 *Wom.* Ye godlike youths,
Bless the propitious star that led you to us;
We are the happiest of the race of mortals;
Of freedom, mirth, and joy, the only heirs:
But you shall share them with us; for this cup,
This nectar'd cup, the sweet assurance gives
Of present, and the pledge of future bliss.

[*She offers 'em the cup, which they both put by.*

SONG.

SONG. *By a Man.*

By the gaily circling glaſs,
We can ſee how minutes paſs;
By the hollow caſk are told
How the waining night grows old.
Soon, too ſoon, the buſy day
Drives us from our ſport and play.
What have we with day to do?
Sons of care, 'twas made for you.

E. Bro. Forbear, nor offer us the poiſon'd ſweets.

1 *Wom.* Oh! how unſeemly ſhows in blooming youth
Such grey ſeverity!——But come with us,
We to the bow'r of bliſs will guide your ſteps.

SONG. *By a Woman in a paſtoral habit.*

Would you taſte the noon-tide air?
To yon fragrant bower repair,
Where, woven with the poplar bough,
The mantling vine will ſhelter you.
Down each ſide a fountain flows;
Tinkling, murmuring, as it goes,
Lightly o'er the moſſy ground;
Sultry Phœbus ſcorching round.
Round, the languid herds and ſheep
Stretch'd o'er ſunny hillock ſleep,
While on the hyacinth and roſe
The fair does all alone repoſe.
All alone———and in her arms
Your breaſt may beat to Love's alarms;
Till bleſs'd, and bleſſing, you ſhall own
The joys of Love are joys alone.

Y. Bro. How low ſinks beauty, when by vice debas'd!
How fair that form, if virtue dwelt within!
But, from this ſhameleſs advocate of ſhame,
To me the warbled ſong harſh diſcord grates.

1 *Wom.* No more; theſe formal maxims miſbecome you;
They only ſuit ſuſpicious ſhrivell'd age.

SONG. *By a Man and two Women.*

Live, and love, enjoy the fair,
Baniſh ſorrow, baniſh care;
Mind not what old dotards ſay,

Age

Age has had his ſhare of play;
But youth's ſport begins to-day.
From the fruits of ſweet delight
Let not ſcare-crow virtue fright.
Here in pleaſure's vineyard we
Rove, like birds, from tree to tree,
Careleſs, airy, gay, and free.

E. Bro. How can your impious tongues profane the name
Of ſacred virtue, and yet promiſe pleaſure
In lying ſongs of vanity and vice?
From virtue ſever'd, pleaſure phrenzy grows,
And always flies at reaſon's cool return.
But we forget: who hears the voice of truth,
In noiſy riot and intemp'rance drown'd?
Thyrſis be then our guide! we'll follow thee,
And ſome good angel bear a ſhield before us!

[*Exeunt* Brothers *and* Spirit.

1 *Wom.* Come, come, my friends, and partners of my joys,
Leave to theſe pedant youths their bookiſh dreams;
A beardleſs Cynic is the ſhame of nature,
Beyond the cure of this inſpiring cup;
Away, nor waſte a moment more about 'em.

Chorus. Away, away, away,
To Comus' court repair;
There night outſhines the day,
There yields the melting fair.

[*Exeunt ſinging.*

ACT II.

SCENE *opens, and diſcovers a magnificent Hall in* Comus's *palace.* Comus *and attendants ſtand on each ſide of the Lady, who is ſeated in an enchanted chair.*

COMUS *ſpeaks.*

COME, thou goddeſs fair and free,
In heaven yclep'd Euphroſyne;
Haſte thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jeſt and youthful jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathed ſmiles,

Such

Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right-hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty.

[*Whilst these lines are repeating, enter a Nymph representing* Euphrosyne, *or* Mirth; *who advances to the Lady, and sings the following song.*

SONG.

Come, come, bid adieu to fear;
Love and harmony live here.
No domestic jealous jars,
Buzzing slanders, wordy wars,
In my presence will appear;
Love and harmony reign here.
Sighs to amorous sighs returning,
Pulses beating, bosoms burning,
Bosoms with warm wishes panting,
Words to speak those wishes wanting,
Are the only tumults here,
All the woes you need to fear:
Love and harmony reign here.

Lady. How long must I, by magic fetters chain'd
To this detested seat, hear odious strains
Of shameless folly, which my soul abhors?

Comus. Now softly flow let Lydian measures move,
And breathe the pleasing pangs of gentle love.

[*The pastoral Nymph advances slow, with a melancholy and desponding air, to the side of the stage, and repeats, by way of soliloquy, the first six lines, and then sings the ballad. In the mean time she is observed by* Euphrosyne, *who by her gesture expresses to the audience her different sentiments of the subject of her complaint, suitably to the character of their several songs.*

RECITATIVE.

How gentle was my Damon's air!
Like sunny beams his golden hair;

His

His voice was like the nightingale's;
More sweet his breath than flow'ry vales.
How hard such beauties to resign!
And yet that cruel task is mine!

BALLAD.

On every hill, in every grove,
Along the margin of each stream,
Dear conscious scenes of former love,
I mourn, and Damon is my theme.
The hills, the groves, the streams remain,
But Damon there I seek in vain.
From hill, from dale, each charm is fled;
Groves, flocks, and fountains, please no more;
Each flow'r in pity droops its head,
All nature does my loss deplore.
All, all reproach the faithless swain,
Yet Damon still I seek in vain.

RECITATIVE. *By Euphrosyne.*

Love, the greatest bliss below,
How to taste few women know;
Fewer still the way have hit
How a fickle swain to quit.
Simple nymphs, then learn of me,
How to treat inconstancy.

BALLAD.

The wanton god, that pierces hearts,
Dips in gall his pointed darts;
But the nymph disdains to pine,
Who bathes the wound with rosy wine.
Farewel lovers, when they're cloy'd;
If I am scorn'd because enjoy'd,
Sure the squeamish fops are free
To rid me of dull company.
They have charms whilst mine can please;
I love them much, but more my ease;
Nor jealous fears my love molest,
Nor faithless vows shall break my rest.
Why should they e'er give me pain,
Who to give me joy disdain?
All I hope of mortal man,
Is to love me whilst he can.

Comus. Why are you vex'd, lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns nor anger; from theſe gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleaſures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts.
And firſt behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his cryſtal bounds.

Lady. Know, baſe deluder, that I will not taſte it.
Keep thy deteſted gifts for ſuch as theſe.

[*Points to his crew.*

Comus. Why ſhou'd you be ſo cruel to yourſelf,
And to thoſe dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle uſage and ſoft delicacy?
That have been tir'd all day without repaſt,
And timely reſt have wanted. But, fair virgin,
This will reſtore all ſoon.

Lady. 'Twill not, falſe traitor!
'Twill not reſtore the truth and honeſty
That thou haſt baniſh'd from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage and the ſafe abode
Thou told'ſt me of? Hence with thy brew'd enchantments.
Were it a draught for Juno when ſhe banquets,
I wou'd not taſte thy treas'nous offer—None,
But ſuch as are good men, can give good things;
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wiſe appetite.
Shall I go on? or have I ſaid enough?

Comus. Enough to ſhow
That you are cheated by the lying boaſts
Of ſtarving pedants, that affect a fame
From ſcorning pleaſures which they cannot reach.

Euphroſyne *ſings* *.

Preach not to me your muſty rules,
Ye drones that mould in idle cell;
The heart is wiſer than the ſchools,
The ſenſes always reaſon well.
If ſhort my ſpan, I leſs can ſpare
To paſs a ſingle pleaſure by;
An hour is long, if loſt in care;
They only live who life enjoy.

Comus

* Sung by Comus, as now performed at Covent-garden theatre.

Comus. Lift, lady; be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that fame vaunted name virginity.
What need a vermeil tinctur'd lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or treſſes like the morn?
There was another meaning in theſe gifts;
Think what, and be advis'd: you are but young yet;
This will inform you ſoon.
One ſip of this will bathe the drooping ſpirits in delight,
Beyond the bliſs of dreams. Be wiſe, and taſte.——

[*The* Brothers *ruſh in with ſwords drawn, wreſt the glaſs out of his hand, and break it againſt the ground; his Rout make ſigns of reſiſtance, but are all driven off.*

Enter the firſt Spirit.

What, have you let the falſe enchanter 'ſcape?
O, ye miſtook, you ſhould have ſnatch'd his wand
And bound him faſt; without his rod revers'd,
We cannot free the lady, that ſits here
In ſtony fetters fix'd and motionleſs.
Yet ſtay, be not diſturb'd; now I bethink me.
There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure,
That ſways the Severn ſtream; ſhe can unlock
The claſping charm, and thaw the numbing ſpell,
If ſhe be right invok'd.

Sabrina fair,
Liſten where thou art ſitting
Under the glaſſy, cool, tranſlucent wave;
Liſten for dear honour's ſake,
Goddeſs of the ſilver lake,
Liſten and ſave.

Sabrina *riſes and ſings.*

By the ruſhy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the oſier dank,
My ſliding chariot ſtays,
Thick ſet with agate, and the azure ſheen
Of turkis blue and em'rald green,
That in the channel ſtrays.
Gentle ſwain, at thy requeſt,
I am here.

Firſt

First Spirit.

Goddeſs dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here diſtreſs'd,
Thro' the force and thro' the wile
Of unbleſs'd enchanter vile.

RECITATIVE.

Sab. Shepherd, 'tis my office beſt
To help enſnared chaſtity.
Brighteſt lady, look on me:
Thus I ſprinkle on thy breaſt
Drops, that from the fountain pure
I have kept, of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy ruby'd lip:
Next this marble venom'd ſeat,
Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaſte palms moiſt and cold:
Now the ſpell hath loſt his hold;
And I muſt haſte, ere morning-hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

[Sabrina *deſcends, and the* Lady *riſes out of her ſeat; the* Brothers *embrace her tenderly.*

Y. Bro. Why did I doubt? Why tempt the wrath of heav'n
To ſhed juſt vengeance on my weak diſtruſt?

E. Bro. The freedom of the mind, you ſee, no charm,
No ſpell, can reach; that righteous Jove forbids,
Leſt man ſhould call his frail divinity
The ſlave of evil or the ſport of chance.
Inform us, Thyrſis, if for this thine aid
We aught can pay that equals thy deſert.

First Spirit *diſcovering himſelf.*

Pay it to heaven! There my manſion is:
But when a mortal, favour'd of high Jove,
Chances to paſs thro' yon advent'rous glade,
Swift as the ſparkle of a glancing ſtar
I ſhoot from heav'n to give him ſafe convoy.
Now my taſk is ſmoothly done,
I can fly or I can run,

Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin ſlow doth bend;
And from thence can ſoar as ſoon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue, ſhe alone is free:
She can teach you how to climb
Higher than the ſphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itſelf would ſtoop to her.

THE

THE ORATORS.

IN THREE ACTS.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	Hay-Market, 1762.	1767.
Lecturer,	Mr Foote.	Mr Foote.
Pupils,	Mr Weſton.	Mr Weſton.
	Mr M'George.	Mr Pynn.
	Mr Quin.	Mr Quick.
	Mr Banniſter.	Mr Banniſter.
	Mr Williams.	Mr Davis.
	Mr Young.	Mr Loveman.
	Mr Booth.	Mr Caſtle.
	Mr Palmer.	Mr Palmer.
	Mr Kickill.	Mr Strange.
	Mr Somers.	Mr Smith.
	Mr Pearce.	Mr Pearce.
		Mr Keen.
		Mr Gardiner.
		Mr Newton.
		Mr Shuter.

ACT I.

Enter WILL TIREHACK *and* HARRY SCAMPER, *booted, with whips in their hands, into a ſide-box.*

SCAMPER.

PSHA! zounds! prithee, Will, let us go; what ſignifies our ſtaying here?

Tire. Nay, but tarry a little; beſides, you know we promis'd to give Poll Bayliſs and Bett Skinner the meeting.

Scam. No matter, we shall be sure to find them at three at the Shakespeare.

Tire. But as we are here, Harry, let us know a little what 'tis about?

Scam. About! Why lectures, you fool! Have not you read the bills; and we have plenty of them at Oxford, you know?

Tire. Well, but for all that, there may be fun.

Scam. Why then, stay and enjoy it yourself; and I'll step to the Bull and Gate, and call upon Jerry Lack-Latin and my horse. We shall see you at three? [*Rising.*

Tire, Nay, but, prithee, stay.

Scam. Rot me if I do. [*Going out of the box.*

Tire. Halloo, Harry; Harry—

Scam. Well, what's the matter now? [*Returning.*

Tire. Here's Poll Baylifs just come into the gallery.

Scam. No——

Tire. She is, by——

Scam. [*looking.*] Yes, faith! it is she, sure enough—How goes it, Poll?

Tire. Well, now, we shall have you, I hope?

Scam. Ay, if I thought we should get any fun.

Tire. I'll make an inquiry. Halloo! snuffers, snuffers?

Candle-snuffer. Your pleasure, Sir?

Tire. What is all this business about here?

Snuf. Can't say, Sir.

Scam. Well, but you could if you would, let us into the secret.

Snuf. Not I, upon my honour!

Tire. Your honour, you son of a whore! D'ye hear, bid your master come hither; we want to ask him a question?

Snuf. I will— [*Exit.*

Tire. Scamper, will you ask him, or shall I?

Scam. Let me alone to him—

Enter Foote.

Tire. O! here he is—

Foote. Your commands with me, gentlemen?

Scam. Why, you must know Will and I here are upon a

ſcheme from Oxford; and becauſe caſh begins to run low —How much have you, Will?

Tire. Three-and-twenty ſhillings, beſides the crown I paid at the door.

Scam. And I eighteen. Now, as this will laſt us but to-night, we are willing to huſband our time; let us ſee, Will, how are we engag'd?

Tire. Why at three, with Bett and Poll, there, at the Shakeſpeare: after that to the Coronation; for you know we have ſeen it but nine times—

Scam. And then back to the Shakeſpeare again; where we ſup, and take horſe at the door.

Tire. So there's no time to be loſt, you ſee: we deſire, therefore, to know what ſort of a thing this affair here of your's is? What, is it damn'd funny and comical?

Foote. Have you not ſeen the bills?

Scam. What, about the lectures! ay, but that's all ſlang, I ſuppoſe; no, no. No tricks upon travellers; no, we know better—What, are there any more of you; or do you do it all yourſelf?

Foote. If I was in want of comedians, you, gentlemen, are kind enough to lend me a lift; but, upon my word, my intentions, as the bill will inform you, are ſerious—

Tire. Are they? then I'll have my money again. What, do you think we come to London to learn any thing?—Come, Will. [*Going.*

Foote. Hold, gentlemen, I would detain you, if poſſible. What is it you expect?

Scam. To be jolly, and laugh, to be ſure—

Foote. At what?

Tire. At what—damme, I don't know—at you, and your frolics and fancies—

Foote. If that is all you deſire; why, perhaps we ſhan't diſappoint you—

Scam. Shan't you—why, that is an honeſt fellow—come, begin—

Foote. But you'll be ſo kind as not to interrupt me?

Scam. Never fear—

Foote. Ladies and gentlemen—

[Suds *from the oppoſite box calls to* Foote, *and ſtops him ſhort.*

Suds. Stop a minute; may I be permitted to ſpeak?

Foote. Doubtleſs, Sir—

Suds. Why, the affair is this. My wife Alice—for you muſt know my name is Ephraim Suds, I am a ſoap-boiler in the city,—took it into her head, and nothing would ſerve her turn but that I muſt be a common-council man this year; for, ſays Alice, ſays ſhe, it is the onlieſt way to riſe in the world.

Foote. A juſt obſervation—you ſucceeded?

Suds. Oh! there was no danger of that—yes, yes, I got it all hollow; but now to come to the marrow of the buſineſs. Well, Alice, ſays I, now I am choſen, what's next to be done? "Why now, ſays Alice, ſays "ſhe, thee muſt learn to make ſpeeches; why doſt not "ſee what purferment neighbour Grogram has got; "why man, 'tis all brought about by his ſpeechifying. "I tell thee what, Ephraim, if thou canſt but once learn "to lay down the law, there's no knowing to what thee "may'ſt riſe—"

Foote. Your lady had reaſon.

Suds. Why, I thought ſo too; and, as good luck would have it, who ſhould come into the city, in the very nick of time, but maſter profeſſor along with his lectures—Adod, away, in a hurry, Alice and I danced to Pewterer's Hall.

Foote. You improv'd, I hope?

Suds. O Lud! it is unknown what knowledge we got! We can read—Oh! we never ſtop to ſpell a word now—And then he told us ſuch things about verbs, and nouns, and adverbs, that never entered our heads before, and emphaſis, and accent; heav'n bleſs us, I did not think there had been ſuch things in the world.

Foote. And have you ſpeechify'd yet?

Suds. Soft; ſoft and fair; we muſt walk before we can run—I think I have laid a pretty foundation. The Manſion-houſe was not built in a day, Maſter Foote. But to go on with my tale, my dame one day looking over the papers, came running to me; now, Ephraim, ſays ſhe, thy buſineſs is done; rare news, lad; here is a man at the other end of the town that will make thee a ſpeecher at once, and out ſhe pull'd your propoſals. Ah, Alice, ſays I, thee be'ſt but a fool; why, I know that man,

man, he is all upon his fun; he lecture!—why, 'tis all but a bam-—Well, 'tis but seeing, says she; so, wolens nolens, she would have me come hither: now if so be you be serious, I shall think my money wisely bestow'd; but if it be only your comical works, I can tell you, you shall see me no more.

Foote. Sir, I should be extremely sorry to lose you, if I knew but what would content you?

Suds. Why, I want to be made an orator on; and to speak speeches, as I tell you, at our meetings, about politics, and peace, and addresses, and the new bridge, and all them kind of things.

Foote. Why, with your happy talents I should think much might be done.

Suds. I am proud to hear you say so, indeed I am. I did speechify once at a vestry concerning new-lettering the church-buckets, and came off cutely enough; and, to say the truth, that was the thing that provok'd me to go to Pewterer's Hall. [*Sits down again.*

Foote. Well, Sir, I flatter myself, that in proportion to the difference of abilities in your two instructors, you will here make a tolerable progress. But now, Sir, with your favour, we will proceed to explain the nature of our design; and I hope, in the process, you, gentlemen, will find entertainment, and you, Sir, information.

Mr Foote *then proceeds in his lecture.*

My plan, gentlemen, is to be consider'd as a superstructure on that admirable foundation laid by the modern professor of English, both our labours tending to the same general end, the perfectioning of our countrymen in a most essential article, the right use of their native language. The English orators are to be divided into four distinct classes, the pulpit, the senate, the bar, and the stage: with the first of these branches, the pulpit, I shan't interfere; and, indeed, so few people now of consequence and consideration frequent the churches, that the art is scarce with cultivation. The bar—

Scam. Psha! there's enough of this dull prosing; come, give us a little of something that's funny; you talk'd about pupils. Could not we see them?

Foote. Rather too precipitate, Sir; but, however, in some measure to satisfy you, and demonstrate the success of

of our ſcheme; give me leave to introduce to you a moſt extraordinary inſtance, in the perſon of a young Highlander. It is not altogether a year ſince this aſtoniſhing ſubject ſpoke nothing but Erſe. Encourag'd by the prodigies of my brother profeſſor's ſkill, whoſe fame, like the Chevalier Taylor's, pierces the remoteſt regions, his relations were tempted to ſend this young genius to Edinburgh; where he went through a regular courſe of the profeſſor's lectures, to finiſh his ſtudies; he has been about ſix weeks under my care, and, conſidering the time, I think you will be amaz'd at his progreſs. Donald?—

Enter Donald.

Don. What's yer wull, Sir?

Foote. Will you give theſe ladies and gentlemen a proof of your ſkill?

Don. Ah, ye wad ha' a ſpecimen of my oratorical art?

Foote. If you pleaſe.

Don. In gude troth on ye ſal; wol ye gi me a topic?

Foote. O, chooſe for yourſelf.

Don. It's aw one to Donald.

Foote. What think you of a ſhort panegyrick on the ſcience we are treating of?

Don. On oratory? Wi' aw my heart.

Foote. Mind your action; let that accompany your words—

Don. Dunna heed, man—The topic I preſum to haundle, is the miraculous gifts of an orator, wha, by the bare power of his words, leads men, women, and bairns as he liſts—

Scam. And who?

Don. [*tartly.*] Men, women, and bairns.

Scam. Bairns! who are they?

Foote. Oh, children—his meaning is obvious enough.

Don. Ay, ay; men, women, and bairns, wherever he liſts. And firſt for the antiquity of the art—Ken ye, my lads, wha was the firſt orator?—Mayhap, ye think it was Tully the Latiniſt? ye are wide o' the mark: Or Demoſthenes the Greek? in gude troth, ye're as far aff as before—Wha was it, then? It was e'en that arch chiel, the Deevil himſel—

Scam.

Scam. [*haſtily.*] The devil it was; how do you prove that?

Don. Guds zounds, mon, ye brake the thrid of my harang; an ye'll but had your tongue, I'ſe prove it as plain as a pike-ſtaff.

Tire. Be quiet, Will, and let him go on.

Don. I ſay it was that arch chiel, the Deevil himſel. Ye ken weel, my lads, how Adam and Eve were planted in Eden, wi plenty o' bannocks and kail, and aw that they wiſhed, but were prohibited the eating of pepins——

Scam. Apples—

Don. Weel, weel, and are na pepins and apples aw the ſame thing?

Foote. Nay, pray, gentlemen, hear him out. Go on with your pepins.——

Don. Prohibited the eating of pepins; upon which, what does me the orator Satan, but he whiſpers a ſaft ſpeech in her lug; egad our grannum fell to in an inſtant, and eat a pepin without ſtaying to pare it—[*Addreſſes himſelf to the Oxonians.*] Ken ye, lads, wha was the firſt orator, now?

Tire. [*to* Scamper.] What ſay you to that?

Scam. By my ſoul, the fellow's right—

Don. Ay, but ye wan'na ha' patience—ye wan'na ha' patience, lads—

Tire. Hold your jaw, and go on—

Don. Now, we come to the definition of an orator: and it is from the Latin words, *oro*, *orare*, to intreat, or perſwad; and how? by the means o' elocution or argument, which argument conſiſts o' letters, which letters join'd mak ſyllables, which ſyllables compounded mak words, which words combin'd mak ſentences or periods, or which aw together mak an orator; ſo the firſt gift of an orator is words—

Scam. Here, Donald, you are out.

Don. How ſo?

Scam. Words the firſt gift of an orator! No, Donald, no, at ſchool I learn'd better than that: Do'ſt not remember, Will, what is the firſt perfection of an orator? action; the ſecond, action; the third, action.

Tire.

Tire. Right, right, Harry, as right as my nail; there, Donald, I think he has given you a doſe—

Don. An ye ſtay me i' the midſt o' my argument—

Scam. Why don't you ſtick to truth?

Don. I tell ye, I can logically.

Tire. Damn your logic—

Don. Mighty weel—maiſter Foote, how ca' ye this uſage?

Foote. Oh, never mind them—proceed.

Don. In gude troth, I'ſe not ſay ane word mare.

Foote. Finiſh, finiſh, Donald.—

Don. Ah! they have jumbled aw my ideas together; but an they wall enter into a fair argumentation, I'ſe convince 'em that Donald Macgregor is mare than a match.—

Scam. You be——

Don. Very weel——

Foote. Nay, but my dear Donald—

Don. Hands aff, Maiſter Foote—I ha' finiſh'd my tale, the De'el a word mare ſal ye get out o' Donald—yer ſervant, Sir. [*Exit.*

Foote. You ſee, gentlemen, what your impatience has loſt us.

Scam. Rot him, let him go. But is this fellow one of your pupils? why, what a damnable twang he has got, with his men, women, and bairns—

Foote. His pronunciation is, I own, a little irregular; but then conſider he is but merely a novice: why, even in his preſent condition, he makes no bad figure for his five minutes at the Pantheon and Lycæum; and in a month or two we ſhan't be aſham'd to ſtart him in a more reſpectable place.

But now, gentlemen, we are to deſcend to the peculiar eſſential qualities of each diſtinct ſpecies of oratory; and firſt for the bar—but as no didactic rules can ſo well convey, or words make a proper impreſſion, we will have recourſe to more palpable means, and endeavour, by a lively imitation, to demonſtrate the extent of our art. We muſt for this end employ the aid of our pupils; but as ſome preparation is neceſſary, we hope you will indulge us in a ſhort interruption.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE, *A Hall of Juſtice.*

Enter FOOTE.

THE firſt ſpecies of oratory we are to demonſtrate our ſkill in, is that of the bar; and, in order to give our lecture an air of reality, you are to ſuppoſe this a court of juſtice, furniſh'd with proper miniſters to diſcharge the neceſſary functions. But to ſupply theſe gentlemen with buſineſs, we muſt likewiſe inſtitute an imaginary cauſe; and, that the whole may be ideal, let it be the proſecution of an imaginary being; I mean the phantom of Cock-lane, a phenomenon that has much puzzled the brains and terrified the minds of many of our fellow-ſubjects.

You are to conſider, ladies and gentlemen, that the language of the bar is a ſpecies of oratory diſtinct from every other. It has been obſerv'd, that the ornaments of this profeſſion have not ſhone with equal luſtre in an aſſembly near their own hall; the reaſon aſſign'd, tho' a pleaſant, is not the true one. It has been hinted, that theſe gentlemen were in want of their briefs. But, were that the diſeaſe, the remedy would be eaſy enough: they need only have recourſe to the artifice ſucceſsfully practis'd by ſome of their colleagues; inſtead of having their briefs in their hands, to hide them at the bottom of their hats.

[*Calls to his pupils, who enter dreſs'd as a juſtice, a clerk, a ſerjeant at law, and a counſellor.*]

You will remember, gentlemen, your proper pauſes, repetitions, hums, ha's, and interjections: now ſeat yourſelves, and you the counſel remember to be mighty dull, and you the juſtices to fall aſleep. I muſt prepare to appear in this cauſe as a witneſs. [*Exit.*

Juſ. Clerk, read the indictment.

Cler. [*reads.*] Middleſex, to wit.

Fanny Phantom, you are indicted, That on or before the firſt day of January 1762, you the ſaid Fanny did, in a certain houſe, in a certain ſtreet call'd *Cock-lane*, in the county of Middleſex, malicioufly, treacherouſly,

cherouſly, wickedly, and wilfully, by certain thumpings, knockings, ſcratchings, and flutterings, againſt doors, walls, wainſcots, bedſteads, and bed-poſts, diſturb, annoy, aſſault, and terrify divers innocent, inoffenſive, harmleſs, quiet, ſimple people, reſiding in, at, near, or about the ſaid Cock-lane, and elſewhere, in the ſaid county of Middleſex, to the great prejudice of ſaid people in ſaid county. How ſay you? guilty, or——

Coun. [*ſtops the Clerk ſhort.*] May it pleaſe your worſhip—hem—I am counſel in this cauſe for the ghoſt—hem—and before I can permit her to plead, I have an objection to make, that is—hem—I ſhall object to her pleading at all.—hem—It is the ſtanding law of this country—hem—and has—hem—always been ſo allow'd, deem'd, and practis'd, that—hem—all criminals ſhould be try'd *per pares*, by their equals—hem—that is—hem—by a jury of equal rank with themſelves. Now, if this be the caſe, as the caſe it is, I—hem—I ſhould be glad to know how my client can be try'd in this here manner. And firſt, who is my client? She is in the indictment call'd a phantom, a ghoſt. What is a ghoſt? a ſpirit. What is a ſpirit? a ſpirit is a thing that exiſts independently of, and is ſuperior to, fleſh and blood. And can any man go for to think, that I can adviſe my client to ſubmit to be try'd by people of an inferior rank to herſelf? certainly no—I therefore humbly move to quaſh this indictment, unleſs a jury of ghoſts be firſt had and obtain'd; unleſs a jury of ghoſts be firſt had and obtain'd. [*Sits down.*

Serj. I am in this cauſe council againſt Fanny Phantom the ghoſt;—eh,—and notwithſtanding the rule laid down by Mr Proſequi be—eh—right in the main, yet here it can't avail his client a whit. We allow—eh—we do allow, pleaſe your worſhip, that Fanny *quoad* Phantom—eh—had originally a right to a jury of ghoſts; but—eh—if ſhe did, by any act of her own, forfeit this right, her plea cannot be admitted. Now, we can prove, pleaſe your worſhip, prove by a cloud of witneſſes, that ſaid Fanny did, as ſpecified in the indictment, ſcratch, knock, and flutter——eh——which ſaid ſcratchings, knockings, and flutterings—eh—being opera-

operations, merely peculiar to flesh, blood, and body—eh—we do humbly apprehend——eh——that by condescending to execute the aforesaid operations, she has wav'd her privilege as a ghost, and may be try'd in the ordinary form, according to the statute so made and provided in the reign of, &c. &c. &c.

Your worship's opinion.

Tire. Smoke the justice, he is as fast as a church.

Scam. I fancy he has touch'd the tankard too much this morning; he'll know a good deal of what they have been saying.

Just. [*is wak'd by the clerk, who tells him they have pleaded.*] Why the objection——oh——brought by Mr Profequi, is [*whispers the clerk*] doubtless provisionally a valid objection; but then, if the culprit has, by an act of her own, defeated her privilege, as asserted in Mr Serjeant's replication: we conceive she may be legally try'd—oh—Besides—oh—Besides, I, I, I can't well see how we could impannel a jury of ghosts; or—oh—how twelve spirits, who have no body at all, can be said to take a corporal oath, as requir'd by law—unless, indeed, as in case of the peerage, the prisoner may be try'd on their honour.

Coun. Your worship's distinction is just; knockings, scratchings, &c. as asserted by Mr Serjeant.——

Serj. Asserted——Sir, do you doubt my instructions?

Coun. No interruptions, if you please, Mr Serjeant; I say as asserted, but can assertions be admitted as proofs? certainly no——

Serj. Our evidence is ready——

Coun. To that we object, to that we object, as it will anticipate the merits—your worship——

Serj. Your worship——

Just. Why, as you impeach the ghost's privilege, you must produce proofs of her scratchings.

Serj. Call Shadrach Bodkin.

Clerk. Shadrach Bodkin, come into court.

Enter Bodkin.

Serj. Pray, Mr Bodkin, where do you live?

Bod. I sojourn in Lukener's-lane.

Serj. What is your profession?

Bod. I am a teacher of the word, and a taylor.

Scam. Zounds, Will, it is a Methodiſt.

Tire. No, ſure!

Scam. By the lord Harry, it is.

Clerk. Silence.

Serj. Do you know any thing of Fanny the Phantom?

Bod. Yea—I do.

Serj. Can you give any account of her thumpings, ſcratchings, and flutterings?

Bod. Yea—manifold have been the ſcratchings and knockings that I have heard.

Serj. Name the times.

Bod. I have attended the ſpirit Fanny from the firſt day of her flutterings, even to the laſt ſcratch that ſhe gave.

Serj. How long may that be!

Bod. Five weeks did ſhe flutter, and ſix weeks did ſhe ſcratch.

Scam. Six weeks—Damn it, I wonder ſhe did not wear out her nails.

Clerk. Silence.

Serj. I hope the court is convinced.

Coun. Hold, Maſter Bodkin, you and I muſt have a little diſcourſe. A taylor, you ſay. Do you work at your buſineſs?

Bod. No——

Coun. Look upon me, look upon the court——Then your preſent trade is your teaching?

Bod. It is no trade.

Coun. What is it then, a calling?

Bod. No, it is no calling—it is rather—as I may ſay—a forcing—a compelling—

Coun. By whom?

Bod. By the ſpirit that is within me—

Scam. It is an evil ſpirit, I believe; and needs muſt when the devil drives, you know, Will.

Tire. Right, Harry—

Coun. When did you firſt feel theſe ſpiritual motions?

Bod. In the town of Norwich, where I was born—One day as I was ſitting croſs-legged on my ſhop-board, new-ſeating a cloth pair of breeches of Mr Alderman Crape's—I felt the ſpirit within me, moving upwards

and

and downwards, and this way and that way, and tumbling and jumbling——At firſt I thought it was the colic——

Coun. And how are you certain it was not?

Bod. At laſt I heard a voice whiſpering within me, crying, Shadrach, Shadrach, Shadrach, caſt away the things that belong to thee, thy thimble and ſheers, and do the things that I bid thee.

Coun. And you did?

Bod. Yea, verily.

Coun. I think I have heard a little of you, Maſter Bodkin: and ſo you quitted your buſineſs, your wife, and your children?

Bod. I did.

Coun. You did—But then you commun'd with other mens wives?

Bod. Yea, and with widows and with maidens.

Coun. How came that about, Shadrach?

Bod. I was moved thereunto by the ſpirit.

Coun. I ſhould rather think by the fleſh—I have been told, friend Bodkin, that twelve became pregnant—

Bod. Thou art deceived—they were barely but nine.

Coun. Why, this was an active ſpirit.

Serj. But to the point, Mr Proſequi.

Coun. Well, then—you ſay you have heard thoſe ſcratchings and knockings?

Bod. Yea—

Coun. But why did you think they came from a ſpirit?—

Bod. Becauſe the very ſame thumps, ſcratches, and knocks, I have felt on my breaſt-bone from the ſpirit within me—

Coun. And theſe noiſes you are ſure you heard on the firſt day of January?

Bod. Certain—

Serj. But to what do all thoſe interrogatories tend?

Coun. To a moſt material purpoſe. Your worſhip obſerves, that Bodkin is poſitive as to the noiſes made on the firſt day of January by Fanny the Phantom: now if we can prove an Alibi, that is, that, on that very day, at that very time, the ſaid Fanny was ſcratching and fluttering any where elſe, we apprehend that we deſtroy

the credit of this witneſs.—Call Peter Paragraph.

Clerk. Peter Paragraph, come into court.

Coun. This gentleman is an eminent printer, and has collected, for the public information, every particular relative to this remarkable ſtory; but as he has the misfortune to have but one leg, your worſhip will indulge him in the uſe of a chair.

Clerk. Peter Paragraph, come into court.

Enter Paragraph.

Coun. Pray, Mr Paragraph, where was you born?

Par. Sir, I am a native of Ireland, and born and bred in the city of Dublin.

Coun. When did you arrive in the city of London?

Par. About the laſt autumnal equinox; and now I recollect, my journal makes mention of my departure for England, in the Beſsborough packet, Friday, October the tenth, N. S. or new ſtyle.

Coun. Oh, then the journal is yours?

Par. Pleaſe your worſhip, it is; and relating thereto I believe I can give you a pleaſant conceit—Laſt week I went to viſit a *peer*, for I know *peers*, and *peers know* me. Quoth his Lordſhip to me, Mr Paragraph, with reſpect to your journal, I would wiſh that your paper was whiter, or your ink blacker. Quoth I to the peer, by way of *reply*, I hope you will own there is enough for the money; his lordſhip was pleaſed to laugh. It was ſuch a pretty repartee, he, he, he, he——

Juſt. Pray, Mr Paragraph, what might be your buſineſs in England?

Par. Hem—a little love-affair, pleaſe your worſhip.

Coun. A wife, I ſuppoſe—

Par. Something tending that way; even ſo long ago as January 1739-40, there paſt ſome amorous glances between us: ſhe is the daughter of old Vamp of the Turnſtile; but at that time I ſtifled my paſſion, Mrs Paragraph being then in the land of the living.

Coun. She is now dead?

Par. Three years and three quarters, pleaſe your worſhip: we were exceeding happy together; ſhe was, indeed, a little apt to be jealous.

Coun. No wonder—

Par. Yes: they can't help it, poor ſouls; but notwith-

withſtanding, at her death, I gave her a prodigious good character in my journal.

Coun. And how proceeds the preſent affair?

Par. Juſt now, we are quite at a ſtand—

Coun. How ſo?

Par. The old ſcoundrel her father has play'd me a ſlippery trick.

Coun. Indeed!

Par. As he could give no money in hand, I agreed to take her *fortune* in *copies*. I was to have The Wits *Vade Mecum* entire; four hundred of News from the Inviſible World, in ſheets; all that remained of Glanvil upon Witches; Hill's Bees, Bardana, Brewing, and Balſam of Honey; and three-eighths of Robinſon Cruſoe.

Coun. A pretty fortune!

Par. Yes; they are things that ſtir in the trade; but you muſt know that we agreed to go halves in Fanny the Phantom. But whilſt I and two authors, whom I had hir'd to aſk queſtions, at nine ſhillings a-night, were taking notes of the knockings at the houſe of Mr Parſons himſelf, that old raſcal Vamp had privately printed off a thouſand eighteen-penny ſcratchings, purchaſed of two Methodiſt preachers, at the public houſe over the way—

Coun. Now we come to the point—look upon this evidence; was he preſent at Mr Parſon's knockings?

Par. Never; this is one of the raſcally Methodiſts—Harkee, fellow, how could you be ſuch a ſcoundrel to ſell for genuine your counterfeit ſcratchings to Vamp?

Bod. My ſcratchings were the true ſcratchings——

Par. Why, you lying ſon of a whore, did not I buy all my materials from the girl's father himſelf?

Bod. What the ſpirit commanded, that did I.

Par. What ſpirit?

Bod. The ſpirit within me—

Par. If I could but get at you, I would ſoon try what ſort of a ſpirit it is—ſtop, you villain.

[*Exit* Bodkin.

The rogue has made his eſcape—but I will dog him to find out his haunts, and then return for a warrant—His ſcratchings! a ſcoundrel; I will have juſtice, or I'll turn his tabernacle into a pigſtye. [*Exit* Paragraph.

Coun. I hope, pleaſe your worſhip, we have ſufficiently eſtabliſhed our *alibi*.

Juſt. You are unqueſtionably entitled to a jury of ghoſts.

Coun. Mr Serjeant, you will provide us a lift!

Serj. Let us ſee—you have no objection to Sir George Villars; the evil genius of Brutus; the ghoſt of Banquo; Mrs Veal.

Coun. We object to a woman—your worſhip—

Juſt. Why, it is not the practice; this, it muſt be own'd, is an extraordinary caſe But however, if, on conviction, the Phantom ſhould plead pregnancy, Mrs Veal will be admitted on the jury of matrons.

Serj. I thank your worſhip: then the court is adjourned.

[Terence *and* Dermot *in an upper box.*

Ter. By my ſhoul, but I will ſpake.

Der. Arrah, be quiet, Terence.

Ter. Dibble burn me, but I will: hut, hut, not ſpake! what ſhould ail me? Harkee you, Mr Juſtice—

Scam. Hollo, what's the matter now, Will?

Der. Leave off, honey Terence, now you are well—

Ter. Dermot, be eaſy——

Scam. Hear him——

Tire. Hear him——

Ter. Ay, hear him, hear him; why the matter is this, Mr Juſtice, that little hopping fellow there, that Dublin-journal man is as great a liar as ever was born—

Tire. How ſo?

Ter. Ay, prithee don't bodder me; what, d'ye learn no more manners at Oxford college, than to ſtop a jontleman in the midſt of his ſpeech before he begins? oh, for ſhame of yourſelf—Why, the matter is this, Mr Juſtice: That there, what the debble d'ye ye call him, Pra-Praragraf; but, by my ſhoul, that is none of his name neither, I know the little baſtard as well as myſelf; as to Fanny the Phantom, long life to the poor jontlewoman, he knows no more of her than the mother who bore her—

Suds. Indeed! good Lord, you ſurpriſe me?

Ter. Arrah, now, honey Suds, ſpake when you are

ſpoke

ſpoke to; yon ar'n't upon the jury, my jewel, now; by my ſhoul, you are a little too fat for a ghoſt.

Tire. Prithee, friend Ephraim, let him go on: let's hear a little what he would be at——

Ter. I ſay, he knows nothing about the caſe that is litigated here, d'ye ſee, at all, at all; becaſe why, I haunt ha been from Dublin above four weeks or a month, and I ſaw him in his ſhop every day; ſo that how could he be here and there too? unleſs, indeed, he uſed to fly backwards and forwards, and that, you ſee, is impoſſible, becaſe why he has got a wooden leg.

Scam. What the devil is the fellow about?

Tire. I ſmoke him—Harkee, Terence, who do you take that lame man to be?

Ter. Oh, my jewel, I know him well enough ſure by his parſon, for all he thought to conceal himſelf by changing his name—

Scam. Why, it is Foote, you fool.

Ter. Arrah, who?

Tire. Foote.

Ter. Fot, what the lecture-man, Pa—

Tire. Yes.

Ter. Arrah, be eaſy, honey—

Scam. Nay, inquire of Suds.

Suds. Truly I am minded 'twas he.

Ter. Your humble ſervant yourſelf, Mr Suds; by my ſhoul, I'll wager you three thirteens to a rap, that it is no ſuch matter at all, at all.

Scam. Done—and be judg'd by the company.

Ter. Done—I'll aſk the orator himſelf—here he comes. [*Enter* Foote.] Harkee, honey Fot, was it yourſelf that was happing about here but now?

Foote. I have heard your debate, and muſt give judgment againſt you——

Ter. What, yourſelf, yourſelf!

Foote. It was——

Ter. Then, faith, I have loſt my thirteens—Arrah, but Fot, my jewel, why are you after playing ſuch pranks to bring an honeſt jontleman into company where he is nat——But what, is this ſelling of lectures a thriving profeſſion?

Foote.

Foote. I can't determine as yet; the public have been very indulgent; I have not long open'd.

Ter. By my ſhoul if it anſwers, will you be my pupil, and learn me the trade?

Foote. Willingly——

Ter. That's an honeſt fellow, long life to you, lad.

[*Sits down.*

Foote. Having thus completed our lecture on the eloquence peculiar to the bar, we ſhall produce one great group of orators, in which will be exhibited ſpecimens of every branch of the art. You will have at one view the choleric, the placid, the voluble, the frigid, the frothy, the turgid, the calm, and the clamorous; and, as a proof of our exquiſite ſkill, our ſubjects are not ſuch as a regular education has prepared for the reception of this ſublime ſcience, but a ſet of illiterate mechanics, whom you are to ſuppoſe aſſembled at the Robin-hood in the Butcher-row, in order to diſcuſs and adjuſt the various ſyſtems of Europe, but particularly to determine the ſeparate intereſt of their own mother-country.

ACT III.

SCENE, *The Robin-Hood.*

The PRESIDENT.

Dermot O'Droheda, *a Chairman;* Tom Twiſt, *a taylor;* Strap, *a Shoemaker;* Anvil, *a Smith;* Sam Slaughter, *a Butcher;* Catchpole, *a Bailiff. All with pewter pots before them.*

PRESIDENT.

SILENCE, gentlemen; are your pots repleniſhed with porter?

All. Full, Mr Preſident.

Preſ. We will then proceed to the buſineſs of the day; and let me beg, gentlemen, that you will, in your debates, preſerve that decency and decorum that is due to the importance of your deliberations, and the dignity of this illuſtrious aſſembly——

[*Gets up, pulls off his hat, and reads the motion.* Motion made laſt Monday to be debated to-day, "That, "for the future, inſtead of that vulgar potation called "*porter,*

" *porter*, the honourable members may be supplied with " a proper quantity of Irish usquebaugh.

" Dermot O'Droheda † his mark."

O' Dro. [*gets up.*] That's I myself.

Pref. Mr O'Droheda.

O'Dro. Mr President, the case is this. It is not becase I am any grate lover of that same usquebaugh that I have set my mark to the motion; but becase I did not think it was decent for a number of jontlemen that were, d'ye see, met to settle the affairs of the nation, to be guzzling a pot of porter. To be sure, the liquor, is a pretty sort of a liquor enough when a man is hot with trotting between a couple of poles; but this is another-guess matter, becase why, the head is concerned; and if it was not for the malt and the haps, dibble burn me but I would as soon take a drink from the Thames as your porter. But as to usquebaugh; ah long life to the liquor—it is an exhilirator of the bowels, and a stomatic to the head; I say, Mr President, it invigorates, it stimulates, it—in short, it is the onliest liquor of life, and no man alive will die whilst he drinks it.

[*Sits down.* Twist *gets up, having a piece of paper, containing the heads of what he says, in his hat.*

Pref. Mr Timothy Twist.

T. Twist. Mr President, I second Mr O'Droheda's motion; and, Sir, give me leave—I say, Mr president [*looks in his hat*] give me leave to observe, that, Sir, tho' it is impossible to add any force to what has been advanced by my honourable friend in the straps; yet, Sir, [*looks into his hat again,*] it may, Sir, I say, be necessary to obviate some objections that may be made to the motion. And first, it may be thought—I say, Sir, some gentlemen may think, that this may prove pernicious to our manufacture—[*looks in his hat;*] and the duty, doubtless, it is of every member of this illustrious assembly to have a particular eye unto that; but Mr President—Sir—[*looks in his hat, is confused, and sits down.*

Pref. Mr Twist, O pray finish, Mr Twist.

Twist. [*gets up.*] I say, Mr President, that, Sir, if Sir, it be considered that—as—I say—[*looks in his hat,*] I have nothing farther to say. [*Sits down, and* Strap *gets up.*]

Pref.

Pref. Mr Strap.

Strap. Mr Prefident, it was not my intention to trouble the aſſembly upon this occaſion; but when I hear inſinuations thrown out by gentlemen, where the intereſt of this country is ſo deeply concerned, I own I cannot ſit ſilent; and give me leave to ſay, Sir, there never came before this aſſembly a point of more importance than this; it ſtrikes, Sir, at the very root, Sir, of your conſtitution: for, Sir, what does this motion imply? it implies that porter, a wholeſome, domeſtic manufacture, is to be prohibited at once. And for what, Sir? for a foreign pernicious commodity. I had, Sir, formerly the honour, in conjunction with my learned friend in the leather apron, to expel ſherbet from amongſt us, as I looked upon lemons as a fatal and foreign fruit; and can it be thought, Sir, that I will ſit ſilent to this? No, Sir, I will put my ſhoulders ſtrongly againſt it; I will oppoſe it *manibus totibus*. For ſhould this propoſal prevail, it will not end here: fatal, give me leave to ſay, will, I foreſee, be the iſſue; and I ſhan't be ſurpriſed, in a few days, to hear from the ſame quarter, a motion for the expulſion of gin, and a premium for the importation of whiſky.

[*A hum of approbation, with ſignificant nods and winks from the other members. He ſits down, and* Anvil *and another member get up together; ſome cry* Anvil, *others* Jacob.

Pref. Mr Anvil.

Anvil. Mr Prefident, Sir—

[*The members all blow their noſes, and cough;* Anvil *talks all the while, but is not heard.*

Pref. Silence, gentlemen; pray, gentlemen. A worthy member is up.

Anvil. I ſay, Mr Prefident, that if we conſider this caſe in its utmoſt extent—[*all the members cough, and blow their noſes again,*] I ſay, Sir, I will. Nay, I inſiſt on being heard. If any gentleman has any thing to ſay any where elſe, I'll hear him.

[*Members all laugh:* Anvil *ſits down in a paſſion, and* Slaughter *gets up.*

Pref. Mr Samuel Slaughter.

Sla. Sir, I declare it, at the bare hearing of this here mo-

motion, I am all over in a sweat. For my part, I can't think what gentlemen mean by talking in that there manner; not but I likes that every man should deliver his mind; I does mine; it has been ever my way; and when a member opposes me, I like him the better for it; its right; I am pleas'd; he can't please me more; it is as it should be; and tho' I differ from the honourable gentleman in the flannel night-cap over the way, yet I am pleased to hear him say what he thinks; for, Sir, as I said, it is always my rule to say what I think, right or wrong—[*a loud laugh.*] Ay, ay, gentlemen may laugh; with all my heart, I am used to it, I don't mind it a farthing: but, Sir, with regard to that there motion, I entirely agree with my worthy friend with the pewter pot at his mouth. Now, Sir, I would fain ask any gentleman this here question: Can any thing in nature be more natural for an Englishman than porter? I declare, Mr President, I think it the most wholesome liquor in the world. But if it must be a change, let us change it for rum, a wholesome palatable liquor, a liquor that—in short, Mr President, I don't know such a liquor. Ay, gentlemen may stare; I say, and I say it upon my conscience, I don't know such a liquor. Besides, I think there is in this here affair a point of law, which I shall leave to the consideration of the learned; and for that there reason, I shall take up no more of your time. [*He sits down,* Catchpole *gets up.*

Pres. Mr Catchpole.

Catch. I get up to the point of law. And though, Sir, I am bred to the business, I can't say I am prepared for this question. But though this usquebaugh, as a dram, may not (by name) be subject to a duty, yet it is my opinion, or rather belief, it will be consider'd, as in the case of horses, to come under the article of dry'd goods——But I move that another day this point be debated.

Sla. I second the motion.

[Catchpole *gives a paper to the President, who reads it.*

Pres. Hear your motion.

"That it be debated next Thursday, Whether the "dram usquebaugh is subject to a particular duty; or, as "the

" the caſe of horſes, to be conſidered under the article " of dry'd goods."

All. Agreed, agreed.

Foote. And now, ladies and gentlemen, having produced to you glaring proofs of our great ability in every ſpecies of oratory; having manifeſted, in the perſons of our pupils, our infinite addreſs in conveying our knowledge to others, we ſhall cloſe our morning's lecture, inſtituted for the public good, with a propoſal for the particular improvement of individuals. We are ready to give private inſtructions to any reverend gentleman in his probationary ſermon for a lectureſhip; to young barriſters who have cauſes to open, or motions to make; to all candidates for the ſock or buſkin; or to the new members of any of thoſe oratorical ſocieties with which this metropolis is at preſent ſo plentifully ſtock'd.

ALL

ALL THE WORLD's A STAGE.

IN TWO ACTS.

By Mr JACKMAN.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

	Drury-Lane.	*Edinburgh, 1782.*
Sir Gilbert Pumpkin,	Mr Baddeley.	Mr Charteris.
Ch. Stanley, Officers in the army,	Mr Farren.	Mr Sutherland.
Har. Stukely, Officers in the army,	Mr Palmer.	Mr Hallion.
William, servant to Charles,	Mr Everard.	Mr Bland, junior.
Waiter,	Mr La-Mash.	Mr Simpson.
Diggery, Servants to Sir Gilbert,	Mr Parsons.	Mr Johnson
Cymon, Servants to Sir Gilbert,	Mr Burton.	Mr Banks.
Wat, Servants to Sir Gilbert,	Mr Griffith.	Mr Sparks.
Hostler,	Mr Carpenter.	Mr Hamilton.

WOMEN.

Miss Bridget Pumpkin,	Mrs Hopkins.	Mrs Charteris.
Miss Kitty Sprightly.	Miss P. Hopkins.	Mrs Sparks.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr KING.

PRAY, let me see if what France says be true,
That smiling faces in this land are few.
I'll tell you how they mark you to a tittle:
They say, you think too much, and talk too little;
While you with scorn, cry out against their prate,
And swear, with heels so light, their heads want weight.
Be but some clouds of politics blown o'er,
England would show its laughing face once more.
For this good end our bard throws in his mite,
And hopes to steal you from your cares to-night.
Now for our title—*All the World's a Stage.*
The lively French, of every rank and age,

PROLOGUE.

In acting ſcenes employ their laughing hours,
And life's rough path make gay by ſtrewing flowers.
Let but the faſhion ſpread throughout our iſle,
And what makes Frenchmen grin, will make you ſmile.
The drama would, like alkalis, protect you
From thoſe four humours which ſo much affect you;
Sweeten your blood, with its ſwift current mix,
And cure the crudities of politics.
Our farce exhibits ſuch a ſcene as this—
And low are our *perſonæ dramatis*.
The various ſervants at a country-ſeat,
As actors, furniſh out the curious treat.
In Alexander will the Butler rave,
And nought can Clytus, the fat Coachman, ſave
From Philip's ſon—You'll ſee the hero ſoon,
Death dealing round him with a ſilver ſpoon.
The Cook, Roxana, glowing with deſire,
Burns as ſhe baſtes—her boſom all on fire!
The Groom and Footmen act their parts ſo well,
No longer Tom and Dick, they hear no bell!
The Butler mad—all's in confuſion hurl'd,
He can't obey, for he commands the world!
His victories alone poſſeſs his brain—
So maſter bawls, and miſtreſs ſcolds in vain.
Critic—indulge theſe heroes in their fancies——
Nor, by your frowns, reſtore them to their ſenſes.

ACT I.

SCENE, *An Inn at Shrewſbury.*

Charles Stanley *and* Harry Stukely *at Breakfaſt.*

HARRY.

FAITH, Charles, I cannot think as you do on this ſubject.

Cha. I am ſorry for it; but when you have ſerved two or three campaigns more, take my word for it, Harry, you will have the ſame opinion of the army that I entertain at this moment.

Har. 'Tis impoſſible; the army is the only profeſſion where a great ſoul can be completely gratified: after a glorious and well-fought field, the approbation of my ſovereign, with the acclamations of my brave countrymen, are rewards, amply repaying whole years of ſervice.

Cha.

Cha. True: but the honours we gather very often adorn the head of a commander who has been only an ear-witneſs to this "well-fought field."

Har. Ah, but every individual has his ſhare—

Cha. Of the danger, I grant you; and when a return is made of the killed, wounded, &c you ſee in every news-paper a liſt of them in the following order: three captains, ſeven lieutenants, twelve enſigns, killed; ſo many wounded: then comes in order, the ſerjeants, ſerjeant-majors, drummers, &c. &c. &c. and as to the rank and file, they are given to you in the lump; one hundred, or one thouſand, juſt as it happens.

Har. But their memories live for ever in the hearts of their countrymen.

Cha. Yes, while the windows are in a blaze on the news of a victory, or while a city-politician drinks his diſh of coffee and reads the ſtory: after that moment, their memories and their bodies decay together. Well, give me a good wife, eaſe, and a moderate competence.

Har. How comes it, Charles, that with theſe ſentiments you ever wore a cockade? and, what is more uncountable, ſignalized yourſelf in ſo extraordinary a manner during the late war?

Cha. I'll tell you:—Whenever I receive the pay of my ſovereign, and am honoured with the character of his truſty and well-beloved, I will faithfully, and I hope bravely, diſcharge the confidence he repoſes in me.——But, Harry, you have no ſerious objection to matrimony: if you have, we had better proceed no further; our project has a period.

Har. Not in the leaſt, I aſſure you: I think myſelf capable of engaging in both the fields of love and war. I will marry becauſe it has its conveniencies.

"——But when light-wing'd toys
" Of feather'd Cupid foil with wanton dulneſs
" My ſpeculative and offic'd inſtruments,
" Let all indign and baſe adverſities
" Make head againſt my eſtimation."

There's a touch of Othello for you, and, I think, *à-propos*.

Cha. 'Egad, Harry, that ſpeech puts me in mind of a letter which I receiv'd from Miſs Kitty Sprightly, the fair ward of my uncle Sir Gilbert Pumpkin—You muſt know, we are to have a play acted at the old family-manſion for our entertainment, or rather for the entertainment of Miſs Kitty; who is ſo mad after every thing that has the appearance of a theatre, that I ſhould not be ſurpriſ'd if ſhe eloped with the firſt ſtrolling company that viſited this part of the country.

Har. Let us have the letter by all means.

Cha. [*reads.*] "Miſs Kitty Sprightly ſends her compliments to Captain Charles; and as ſhe is informed Sir Gilbert has invited him to Strawberry-Hall, ſhe thinks it neceſſary to acquaint Captain Charles, that he muſt ſhortly perfect himſelf in the character of Captain Macheath, as the ladies expect him to perform that character at the manſion-houſe. If he has a good Filch in the circle of his acquaintance, ſhe deſires the Captain will not fail to bring him down."

Har. Why, what the devil! I'll lay my life you have brought me down to play this curious character in this very curious family.

Cha. You are right, Harry; and if you can filch away the old ſiſter, you will play the part to ſome advantage—you will have fifty-thouſand pounds to your benefit, my boy.

Har. You mean this as an introduction to the family—Oh, then have at you—But damn it, I can't ſing; I can act tolerably.

Cha. I'll warrant you. But come, now we have cleaned ourſelves, we will repair to the manſion; we are only two miles from it; they expect us to dinner. William, deſire the hoſtler to put the horſes to. Waiter, a bill.

Enter William.

Wil. The chaiſe, Sir, has been in waiting this half hour.

Cha. Come then; I'll tell you more of my project as we proceed.

Enter Waiter.

Upon my word, waiter, your charges are intolerable: What, five ſhillings for a boiled fowl?

Wait.

Wait. We know your honour isn't on half-pay: we always charge to the pocket of our cuſtomers, your honour.

Har. Well, but good Mr Waiter, take back your bill, and in your charge conſider us on half-pay.

Wait. Lord bleſs your honour! you are in too good fleſh for that: why, your honour looks as fat and as well as myſelf.

Cha. Ha, ha, ha! [*Both laugh.*] There is half-a-crown above your bill, which you may diſpoſe of as you pleaſe. Get you gone!

Wait. Your honours, I hope, will remember honeſt Will Snap, at the Antelope, when you come next to Shrewſbury. [*Exit.*

Cha. Mr Honeſty, your ſervant. Travelling, Charles, is now become ſo chargeable, that few gentlemen of our cloth can afford to breathe the freſh air for a day—

Enter Hoſtler.

But what's your buſineſs?

Hoſt. The hoſtler, your honour. There isn't ſuch a pair of bays, your honour, in the country; they'll take you to Sir Gilbert's in ten minutes without turning a hair.—I hope I ſhall drink your honours health.

Cha. Another fee, Harry—we muſt comply with the cuſtom of travelling.

Har. Get out of my ſight this moment, ye ſet of ſcoundrels, or I will knock you down with this chair. [*Takes up one.*] Landlord, hollo! why the devil don't you ſend in all the poor of the pariſh? This is highway-robbery, without the credit of being robbed. Let us get away, Charles, while we have money to pay the turnpikes.

Cha. Alons! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *A Hall at the Manſion-houſe.*

Enter Diggery, *with a play-book in his hand;* Wat, Cymon, *and ſeveral Clowns, ſervants to the family, making a noiſe.*

Dig. Hold your damn'd tongues! How is it poſſible I can tell you how to act, when you all open like a kennel of hounds? Liſten, but don't ſay a word. I am to be Alexander; and, Wat, you are to be my friend Clintus; and—

Wat. Ah, Muſter Diggery! you ſhall ſee what I'll ſay.

Dig. Damme, hold your tongue, I ſay once more—You'll ſay!—what can you ſay?——Say only what is in the book, and don't be cramming in your own nonſenſe. But liſten all of you, and mind——You muſt know, the man who wrote this play was mad—

Wat. Lord, I ſhould like to play mad.

Dig. Will nobody ſtop this fellow's mouth? Why, you blockhead, you have not ſenſe enough to be mad; you'd play the fool well enough, but how can you extort that damn'd pudding-face of your's to madneſs? Why, Wat, your features are as fix'd as the man in the moon's.

All. Go on, Maſter Diggery, go on.

Dig. Well, let me ſee—[*Turns over the leaves of the play.*] You, Wat, I ſay, is to be Clintus; and I am to ſay before you all, that great Almon gave me birth; then Wat, you are to ſay, You lie!

Wat. Ah, but then you'll ſtick me.

Dig. Never mind that; button your waiſtcoat over one of our trenchers.—Lord, I forgot to begin right; I am firſt to come out of a Tim-whiſkey, which you are to draw; and when I am come down, you are all to fall upon your marrow-bones. And as to you, Wat, if you even look at me, I'll come up, and give you ſuch a douſe of the chops as you never had in your life.

Wat. Let us try; now you ſhall ſee, Muſter Diggery.—

Dig. Then do as I bid you; down every mother's ſkin of you. [*They all kneel down;* Diggery *draws back.*] Don't ſtir none, if Miſs Bridget was ringing every bell in the houſe. When I ſay "Riſe all, my friends," then do you all get up.

Wat. Is that right, Muſter Diggery?

Dig. Very well. Now [*A bell rings.*]—Zounds, here's Miſs Bridget!

Enter Miſs Bridget.

Miſs Brid. Where, in the name of miſchief, have you been, raſcal? Your maſter has been looking for you this hour, and no tidings, high nor low.

Dig. I'm going. [*Exit, leaving the reſt kneeling.*

Miſs

Miſs Brid. Mercy upon us! what's all this? Cymon! Wat! are you all mad? Why don't you anſwer?

Cym. Huſh, huſh! Diggery is to play mad; I muſt not ſtir.

Miſs Brid. Mercy upon me! theſe fellows may be ſtruck mad for ought I know. I'll raiſe the houſe—— Brother, brother! Kitty Sprightly! Where are you all?

Enter Sir Gilbert.

Sir Gil. What the devil's the matter?

Miſs Brid. Look at thoſe fellows, brother; they are all out of their ſenſes; they are all mad.

Sir Gil. Mad, are they!—why then, run and bring me the ſhort blunderbuſs that's hanging in the hall, and I'll take a pop at the whole covey.

Enter Diggery.

Diggery, what's the matter with thoſe fellows?

Dig. Nothing, Sir.

Sir Gil. Nothing! Why, what the devil keeps them in that poſture then?

Dig. Lord, Sir, I'll ſoon make them get upon their legs.

Sir Gil. Do then, I deſire you; and ſend them all to the mad-houſe.

Dig. [*goes up to them all.*] "Riſe all, my friends." [*They all riſe.*] Lord, Sir, we were only acting a play.

Sir Gil. You ſon of a whore! get out of my ſight this moment. [*They all run away.*] Was ever man ſo plagued with ſuch a ſet of ſcoundrels? Morning, noon, and night, is this fellow Diggery taking theſe wretches from their labour, and making Cæſars, Alexanders, and blackamoors of them.

Miſs Brid. Brother, brother, if you had routed that neſt of vagabonds who were mumming in our barn about two months ago, none of this would have happened.

Sir Gil. True, true, ſiſter Bridget. It was but a few days ago I went to take a walk about my fields; when I came back, the firſt thing I ſaw was a large ſheet of paper paſted on the ſtreet-door, and on it were wrote in large characters;

"This

" This evening will be presented here,
" The GREAT ALEXANDER.
" Alexander by Mr DIGGERY DUCKLIN,
" Roxana by Miss TIPPET BUSKY,
" And the part of Statira by a YOUNG LADY,
" (Being her first appearance on any stage.)"
Damme, if I know my own house.

Miss Brid. That's not all, brother; Diggery had nearly smother'd that silly huffy, Tippet, in the oven a few days ago.

Sir Gil. The oven! What the devil brought her there?

Miss Brid. Why, Diggery prevailed upon her to go in; and he said he would break open the door of it with the kitchen poker, and that would be playing Romo.

Sir Gil. Romo! Romeo, you mean; why, sister Bridget, you can't speak English—Surely some dæmon has bewitch'd our family! [*Aside.*] But, pray, what became of Juliet in the oven?

Miss Brid. Hearing a noise, I went down stairs; and the moment he saw me he dropt the poker, and ran away: but I had no sooner opened the door of the oven, than I saw her gasping for breath; and it was as much as I could do to drag her out, and save her from being suffocated.

Sir Gil. Why the devil did you not leave her there? she would have been a good example to the whole family. As to that fellow Diggery, he will be hanged for the murder of some of these creatures, as sure as I am alive. I overhear'd him the other day desiring Cymon to fall on the carving-knife, and he would then die like Cato.

Miss Brid. If they continue these pranks, we shall never be able to receive captain Charles and his friend; they will certainly imagine we are all run mad in good earnest.

Sir Gil. How can it be otherwise? Miss Kitty Sprightly, forsooth, extorted a promise from me the other day, that when Charles and his friend came down, I would permit the Beggar's Opera to be got up (as she phrased it), in order to entertain them.

Miss Brid. Brother, that girl is worse than the whole gang of them.

Sir

Sir Gil. Leave me to manage her: I will endeavour to releaſe myſelf from the promiſe I made her; and inſtead of this play, a ball may anſwer the purpoſe. I hope, ſiſter, you have prepared a good dinner for my nephew and his friend. He informs me in his letter, that the gentleman he brings down with him is a man of family, and a ſoldier that does honour to his profeſſion.

Miſs Brid. I muſt deſire, brother, you will mind your ward, and leave the houſe to me; let him be related to the firſt ducheſs in the land, he ſhall ſay, after he leaves Strawberry-Hall, he never feaſted until he came there.

Enter Diggery.

Dig. Lord, Sir, Captain Macheath is juſt arrived!

Sir Gil. Captain Macheath! my nephew, raſcal; deſire him to walk up immediately.

Dig. Yes, Sir—Oh, Sir, here he is.

Enter Charles *and* Harry.

Sir Gil. Ah, nephew, I am glad to ſee you! How have you been theſe two years? I have not ſeen you ſince your laſt campaign.

Cha. In very good health, Sir; and am ſincerely happy to ſee you ſo. Permit me, Sir, to introduce to your acquaintance the companion of my dangers and my friendſhip.

Sir Gil. Sir, you are welcome to Strawberry-Hall. I love a ſoldier; and I am informed you ſupport the character in all its relations.

Har. You do me great honour, Sir Gilbert; I ſhall ſtudy to deſerve your good opinion.

Dig. He's a better figure than me, and better action too. [*Imitates him.*

Cha. I was in great hopes, my dear aunt, that when next I viſited Strawberry-Hall, I ſhould have found you happy in the poſſeſſion of your old lover, parſon Doſey. I hope you have not baniſh'd him.

Miſs Brid. Don't talk of the wretch; you know he was always my averſion.

[Diggery, *at the ſide, is ſtabbing himſelf with a large key.*

Sir Gil. What are you about, Diggery?

Dig. Sir! [*Puts the key into his pocket.*

Sir Gil. Come, come, I'll tell you the fact, and ſpare her

her blushes. Parson Dosey, you must know, some time ago, was playing a pool of quadrille with my sister and three of her elderly maiden-acquaintances who live in the neighbourhood, when, behold ye, to the astonishment of all the ladies, the parson's right eye dropt into the fish-tray! Egad, I was as much astonish'd as the rest; for none of us had ever discovered the defect, altho' he has been in the parish for so many years: but in a twinkling he whipt it into the socket; and when I looked him in the face, dāmme if I did not think there was as much meaning in it as in any eye about the table.

Dig. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

[Sir Gil. *interrupts him in the middle of his laugh.*

Sir Gil. For shame, Diggery!—[*Drives him off.*]—Bless me, I forgot!—Give me leave, Sir, to introduce you to my sister.

Har. [*Kisses her, and bows very politely.*] Upon my word, Madam, such an imposition deserved a very severe chastisement. I hope, Madam, you never permitted this made-up gentleman to indulge the eye he had left with another view of your fair self?

Miss Brid. Dear Sir, I hope you don't mind my brother; he is always upon his fagaries; he puts me to the blush a hundred times a-day—Faith, a very pretty young fellow! I'll take a more particular view of him presently.

[*Aside.*

Sir Gil. No, no; my sister's observation was a just one; "That when a woman marries, she ought to have a man "naturally complete."

Miss Brid. So, brother, you will go on with your vile conceptions.

Sir Gil. I have no vile conceptions. Why do you suppose them vile, sister Bridget?

Miss Brid. Gentlemen, I cannot stay in the room.

Har. Dear Madam, I beg—pray, Madam—

[*Takes her by the hand.*

Miss Brid. I must go, Sir, I am in such a tremble; I shall certainly drop with confusion, if I stay any longer.

[*Exit* Miss Brid.

Har. Indeed, Sir Gilbert, this canonical gentleman, presuming to address a lady of Miss Pumpkin's qualifications,

tions, without at leaſt diſcovering the imperfection, was a crime not to be forgiven.

Sir Gil. Ha, ha, ha! Miſs Pumpkin's qualifications! Stick to that, Captain; and you will ſoon have a regiment. I find the ſoldier has not ſpoiled the courtier.

Har. I really think what I ſay, Sir;—the deception was unpardonable.

Sir Gil. Not at all: the parſon was very poor, and he knew ſhe was very rich; and if the fellow was blind with one eye, and ſquinted with the other, I could not blame him to marry her, if ſhe was fool enough to conſent to the union: indeed it was my buſineſs to prevent it; but the diſcovery of the glaſs eye did the buſineſs more effectually than I could do, had I the eloquence of a Cicero.

Cha. But pray, uncle, where is your fair charge, Miſs Kitty Sprightly? She's grown, I ſuppoſe, a fine girl by this time.

Sir Gil. A fine girl, quotha!—I do not like that warm inquiry; a red coat may ſpoil my project of marrying her myſelf. [*Conſiders.*] I have it! I'll tell him ſhe's a little crack-brain'd. [*Aſide.*]—Nephew, a word in your ear; the poor girl has got a touch.

Cha. A touch! you don't ſay ſo?

Sir Gil. As ſure as you are in your ſenſes; ſhe's always imagining herſelf to be either Helen, Cleopatra, Polly Peachum, or ſome other female of antiquity, that made a noiſe in the world.

Cha. Oh, ho! I ſmell a rat here; but I'll humour it. [*Aſide.*]—'Tis a ſtrange ſpecies of madneſs, uncle; ſhe's probably play-mad.

Sir Gil. You have it; and the contagion has run thro' the houſe—there's Diggery, Wat, Cymon, Tippet, and the whole family, except my ſiſter, have got the bite. Why, ſometimes you wou'd imagine, from the wooden ſceptres, ſtraw crowns, and ſuch like trumpery, that bedlam was tranſported from Moorfields to the ſpot you now ſtand upon. I give you this hint, that your friend may not be ſurpris'd; you will explain the unhappy ſituation of the poor girl to him.—An excellent thought! it will keep her at a diſtance from him. [*Aſide.*

Cha. Harry, my uncle informs me, [*winking at him,*] that

that his fair ward, the young lady I mentioned to you, has lately had a touch.

Har. A touch! I am heartily sorry for it; how came the unlucky accident? I hope no faithless one-eyed lover in the case.

Sir Gil. Zounds! no, no, no! Why, nephew, you described the girl's disorder abominably—she lately had a touch here, here, Sir. [*Points to his forehead.*

Har. Oh, is that all? I hope, Sir, with a little attention she will be soon restored.

Cha. I am very sorry to hear this account of my dear little Kitty; let us visit her: where is she, uncle?

Sir Gil. Dear little Kitty! Oh, ho! But I'll have all my senses about me.—[*Aside.*] In her own chamber, I suppose: but follow me, and you shall see her; she's quite another thing to what she was two years ago, when you saw her—But come, gentlemen, dinner will be shortly on the table, and I long to have a bumper with you.

[*Exit.*

Har. So, Charles! this is the fair lady you brought me down to run away with.

Cha. Even so.

Har. Why, what the devil would the world say of me for being such a scoundrel?

Cha. Marry the lady, Harry; and when you have fifty thousand pounds in your pocket, the world will be very glad to shake hands and be friends with you.

Har. I would as soon marry Hecate—

Cha. As my aunt? Very polite truly! But keep her out of my way, and you may do with her as you please. This girl, who my uncle says is mad, I believe I shall be able to restore in a short time; and it will go hard with me, if you will assist me in the project, but I will put her into a post-chaise and set out for London this very night.

Har. Command me, dear Charles, in any thing that can be of service to you: but don't you think making the proposal so soon will be rather precipitate?

Cha. Not at all: we are to have the play, you know, at night, previous to which I must rehearse with her; she's romantic, and an elopement need only be mentioned to put it in execution; she has seen so many on the stage,

that her head turns on nothing elſe; beſides, my uncle muſt not have time to ſmell ſuch a ſcheme, or he will ſoon put it out of my power to execute it.

Har. Succeſs attend you, my dear boy. Have you inſtructed William? He's a truſty ſhrewd fellow.

Cha. He has got his leſſon: he will ſoon get into Diggery's good graces, if he can only give him a ſpeech out of a play; however, I hope William will be able to manage him—Oh, here is Diggery.

Enter Diggery, *with a napkin in his hand.*

Cha. Diggery, my honeſt fellow, I am glad to ſee you; why, you are grown out of knowledge: it is ſome years ſince I was firſt favoured with your acquaintance, Diggery.

Dig. So it is, your honour. Let me ſee, [*conſiders,*] you was firſt favour'd with my acquaintance, four years come next Lammas: but I knew nothing then; I was quite a thing, your honour.

Cha. You have improved, Diggery, ſince that time, I ſee, conſiderably.

Dig. How do you ſee that, your honour?

Cha. Why, your face ſhows it; there are the lines of good ſenſe, wit, and humour, in every feature; not that inſipid face you uſed to have, no more expreſſion in it than a toaſted muffin.

Dig. I got all, your honour, by larning to read; you'll ſee me, when I play, look in a way that will frighten the whole family—no muffin faces; all miſpreſſion, your honour.

[Harry *hums a tune out of the Beggar's Opera, and acts.*

Dig. [*looks at him.*] Maſter Charles, who is that gentleman? He's acting, isn't he? Has he a muffin face?

Cha. No, no, Diggery, don't diſturb him; he is one of the firſt actors of the age, and has a face that would frighten the devil when he pleaſes; he'll put us all to rights; I brought him down for the purpoſe.

Dig. Suppoſe your honour deſires him to kill himſelf for a minute or two before dinner. I have tried a thouſand times, and never could kill myſelf to my own ſatiſfaction in all my life. I'll lend him my key. [*Bell rings.*] Coming—Oh, Maſter Charles, I was deſired to bid you

and the gentleman come to dinner, but I quite forgot it; the dinner sat down to the family before I came in—run as hard as you can.

Cha. Come, Harry, the family waits dinner.

[*Exeunt.*

Dig. "The family waits dinner." [*Imitates him.*] I can't do it like him—Lord! how he'll do Captain Macheath in the play! I'm glad he's not to be hanged. [*Sings.*] "Let us take the road"—Hark!

[*Without.*] Diggery!

Dig. Coming. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE, *a Dining Parlour:* Sir Gilbert, Miss Bridget, Miss Kitty, Charles, *and* Harry, *at dinner;* Diggery *attending at the side-board.*

SIR GILBERT.

I HOPE, gentlemen, you like your dinner. As to my wine, there is not better in the country, I'll lay a hogshead of claret.

Har. Your entertainment is so good, Sir Gilbert, that I shall beg leave to prolong my visit. What shall we do, Charles, when we reach London, that cursed seat of noise and bustle.

Cha. Endeavour to reconcile ourselves to it; a soldier must not always expect good quarters. Pray, Miss Kitty, how does your fair friend, Miss Sally Cockle?

Kit. Oh, she has been married a long time, and was lately brought to bed of two thumping boys.

Miss Brid. Child, you must not tell that.

Kit. What, mus'n't I tell the truth? Why then I do say, she was brought to bed of two boys not six months ago; but she will be at our play to-night.

Sir Gil. I told you how it was; but she's not mischievous. [*Aside to* Charles.

Cha. She has not the appearance of it—I am sure her recollection is very good. [*Aside.*

Sir Gil. Come, my young soldiers, let us have a bumper to his Majesty; what say you, my boys?

Har. A hundred, Sir Gilbert; and I say done first.

Sir

Sir Gil. Why, that's rather too many; but while I can ſtand or ſit, have at you. Come, Diggery, let us have three bumpers in a minute here. Diggery! What is that fellow about there?

[Diggery *is kneeling at the foot of the ſide-board, and as if lamenting the death of* Statira: *they all riſe and look at him.*

Sir Gil. I ſay, Diggery—

[Diggery *turns his head about, but continues kneeling.*

Dig. Sir.

Sir Gil. What are you about? Acting again, I ſuppoſe.

Dig. Lord, Sir, I was only ſtriving to cry over Statira. [*Riſes.*

Sir Gil. To cry over Statira! And what have you to do with Statira? Let Statira go to the devil, and give us three bumpers to his Majeſty; and then you may go follow Statira if you will.

Dig. Yes, Sir. [*Brings the wine.*

Sir Gil. Come, boys, here is his Majeſty's health, and a long, glorious, and happy reign to him.

Kit. Indeed, guardie, you frighten poor Diggery ſo, that he forgets his part almoſt as ſoon as he gets it.

Sir Gil. Kitty Sprightly, hold your tongue, I bid you. I have ſurely a right to correct my own ſervants: but reſt ſatisfied; for after this night, if ever I hear the name of that ſheep-ſtealing ſcoundrel Willy, as you call him, I will——There now, that fellow's at his devil's trade again. [Diggery *is fencing with a large knife.*] Call Cymon here, thou imp of the devil; we ſhall be able to do ſomething with him—Oh Lord, oh Lord!

Dig. Cymon—Cymon— [*The laſt very loud.*

Enter Cymon.

Cym. Here.

Sir Gil. Cymon, do you attend table; that fellow is among the incurables.

Cha. After we have performed this play to-night, I fancy, Sir, the family will have quite enough of it.

Miſs Brid. Then I wiſh it was over with all my heart.

Cha. Miſs Kitty, will you drink a glaſs of wine with me? Shall I have the honour to touch your glaſs?

Kit. If you pleaſe, Sir.

Har. Suppoſe, Miſs Pumpkin, we make it a quartetto.

Sir Gil. A quartetto! Why not a quintetto? Cymon, five glaſſes of wine; be quick——I ſuppoſe you are not engaged with Statira.

Cym. Yes—no, your honour.

[*Gives five glaſſes of wine.*

Sir Gil. We could not get any fiſh for you, altho' we ſent far and near for ſome.

Cha. Give me good roaſt beef, uncle, the propereſt diet for a Briton and a ſoldier.

[Cymon *fills a glaſs;* Diggery *takes it up, and gives it to him: he appears to inſtruct* Cymon *what to do with it;* Cymon *drinks it, throws the glaſs over his head, and ſings.*

Cym. "And my comrades ſhall ſee that I die."

[Diggery *and* Cymon *run off. All riſe.*

Miſs Brid. Mercy on me! Cymon's at work again.

Sir Gil. I wiſh, with all my heart, the devil had the whole pack.—Was ever man ſo plagu'd?

Har. Dear Sir Gilbert, do not be uneaſy; they will be all tired of playing before to-morrow night, or I am very much miſtaken.

Kit. Now, guardie, for my part, I think the beſt way will be to let them have their belly-full of playing.

Miſs Brid. For ſhame, Kitty; you muſt not ſay belly-full before company, that's naughty.

Kit. Well, I do ſay, that if guardie would only let us play as much as we pleaſe, is is very probable we ſhould as ſoon be tired of it as he is.

Har. 'Egad, Mrs Kitty, an excellent thought—The girl's out of her ſenſes. [*Aſide to* Charles.]—Suppoſe, Sir Gilbert, we adopt it.

Cha. Do, uncle; my friend and I will engage in one week to play them ſo ſick, that the ſight of a theatre would be as bad as an emetic to them.

Sir Gil. Do you ſay ſo! if I thought that could be done—

Miſs Brid. Indeed, indeed, brother, it will make them all as mad as March hares.

Har. Believe me, Madam, it will not; I knew a gentleman

tleman who every night in his life was at one or other of the play-houſes, until he purchaſed a ſhare in each of them; and afterwards he no more troubled himſelf about the theatre than you do about learning to ride in the great ſaddle.

Miſs Brid. No!—Well, that's amazing.

Sir Gil. Well, well, I leave the management of this matter to you both; do with them as you pleaſe. If we can provide a remedy for this diſorder, let us ſpare no pains to find it out. Siſter, ſhow your nephew and his friend the garden; and do you, Kitty, go too. You will find me in my ſtudy. Take care of that poor girl, Charles; ſhe is very ſenſible at ſome moments. [*Exit.*

Cha. "Fear not my government."

Kit. That's what the black man ſays in the play. This is to my own taſte exactly. [*Aſide.*

Cha. "Oh, my Statira, thou relentleſs fair!
"Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them."

Kit. "Not the ſoft breezes of the genial ſpring,
"The fragrant violet, or opening roſe,
"Are half ſo ſweet as Alexander's breath.
"Then he will talk—good gods, how he will talk!"

[*He leads her out, looking at each other languiſhingly.*

SCENE, *The Garden.*

Enter Miſs Bridget *and* Harry.

Har. Theſe improvements, Madam, are the very extreme of elegance. I take for granted, they were laid out agreeable to your deſign.

Miſs Brid. Partly, Sir. My brother wanted to have the garden crammed full of naked figures, in a moſt undecent way: but I ſaid not; and if you obſerve, they are clothed from head to foot; you can't ſee the ankle of one of them.

Har. There, Madam, you blended decency with elegance, which is little attended to in theſe days. Beſides, the artiſt has the ſame opportunity to ſhew his ſkill on the drapery of a lady's petticoat, as in finiſhing a Venus de Medicis.

Miſs Brid. And ſo I told my brother. Says I, the Venus de Med-med—But wont you pleaſe to ſit down, Sir?

You have walked a great deal; I am afraid you are fatigued—Sid down, Sir, and diſpoſe yourſelf.

[*He brings two garden-chairs to the front of the ſtage; they look at each other languiſhingly.*

And are you certain, Sir, that this kind of play buſineſs will not be attended with any bad conſequences to the family?

Har. Indeed I think not, Madam. A play, certainly, is one of the moſt rational amuſements we have. The Greek and Roman ſtages contributed very much to civilize thoſe nations, and in a great meaſure reſcued them from their original barbarity.

Miſs Brid. So I told my brother—Says I, the Greeks, the Romans, the Iriſh, and a great number of other barbarous nations, had plays.

Har. True, Madam.

Miſs Brid. But he ſaid they were all Jacobites.

Har. The juſtice of that remark, I confeſs, ſtrikes me—But, Madam, you, you, you—Damme me if I know what to ſay to this old fool——Where is Charles?

[*Aſide.*

Miſs Brid. I have touch'd him with my obſervation. What a delicate inſenſibility he diſcovers! [*Aſide.*]—I find, Sir, from your converſation, you have read a monſtrous deal. You have taken a degree, I ſuppoſe, Sir, at one principal adverſity?

Har. There's no ſtanding this. [*Aſide.*]—Oh, yes, Madam; and it coſt me many an uneaſy moment before I could obtain it: the only thing that made my time paſs away, even tolerably, was, that during my probation I ſometimes had the honour of a viſit from the muſes.

Miſs Brid. Pray, Sir, is that the family which lives at Oxford?

Har. No faith, Madam, they very ſeldom even ſojourn there; they are a very whimſical family; and, altho' of the higheſt extraction, very often condeſcend to viſit a cottage inſtead of a palace.

Miſs Brid. I ſhall be very glad to ſee them at Strawberry Hall, or any friend of your's, Sir.

Har. Dear, Madam, your goodneſs overwhelms me. I'll try this old Tabby with a love-ſcene; ſhe grows amorous. [*Aſide.*]—I cannot but think, Madam, of the un-

unaccountable vanity of the parſon, whom Sir Gilbert ſo humourouſly deſcribed to-day. From the enterpriſing genius of this ſpiritual gentleman, and from his wanting an eye, one may with great propriety, I think, give him the name of the canonical Hanibal.

Miſs Brid. Ha, ha! a very good ſummily indeed, Sir; he was indeed quite a Canibal, and ſo I told my brother: but don't mention his name, Sir; it always gives me the ſpleen.

Har. His preſumption, Madam, deſerved death. Monſtrous! to think of obtaining ſuch a hand as this, [*kiſſes it,*] without the requiſites even to gaze upon it.—Oh! 'tis intolerable. [*She riſes, and he kneels.*

Miſs Brid. Dear Sir! Lord, Sir! With what a warmth he kiſſes my hand. Oh! he's a dear deluder. [*Aſide.*]—Sir, Captain, what do you call 'um, if we are ſeen, I am undone.

Har. Be under no apprehenſions, my angel!

[*Kiſſes her hand again.*

Miſs Brid. My angel! there's a word for you—I ſhall certainly give way in a few moments. [*Aſide.*

Enter Diggery, *peeping at the ſide-ſcene.*

Dig. What are theſe two cajoling about? Acting, I ſuppoſe. I'll try if I can't act the ſame way.

Har. Ah, Miſs Pumpkin, Miſs Pumpkin!

[*Kneels; takes out his handkerchief, and weeps.*

Dig. Ah, Miſs Pumpkin, Miſs Pumpkin?

[*Kneels by the ſide-ſcene, and pulls the napkin out of his pocket; part of which muſt be ſeen when he enters.*

Enter Sir Gilbert.

Sir Gil. Where are you, ſiſter? Zounds! what's the matter now? What, are you acting? Have you got the touch?

Har. Humour the thought, Madam. [*Aſide.*

Sir Gil. If Diggery had not been one of the *dramatis perſonæ*, I ſhould have imagined, ſiſter Bridget, that a red coat and a handſome young fellow were things not very diſagreeable to you.

Dig. Yes, Sir, I'm here; I'm always your honour's *perſonæ*.

Sir

Sir Gil. Get out of my ſight this moment, thou—
[*Exit* Diggery.

Har. Diggery here! that may be lucky. [*Aſide.*

Miſs Brid. Indeed, brother, I do not think, that acting is ſo fooliſh a thing as I thought; for the Captain here has repeated ſo many pretty ſpeeches, that I could liſten to them for an hour longer. However, I will go and prepare tea for you—Good b'ye. [*Exit.*

Har. Miſs Bridget has very kindly undertaken, Sir, to perform the part of Mrs Peachum, in this evening's entertainment; and as ſhe takes the part at a ſhort notice, we muſt indulge her with the book. I ſhall make a proper apology to the audience upon that occaſion before the opera begins.

Sir Gil. Mrs Peachum! What, has my ſiſter undertaken to play Mother Peachum?

Har. Moſt kindly, Sir,

Sir Gil. She has! then I ſhall not be ſurpriſed if I ſee my ſhe-goat and all her family dancing the Hayes to-morrow morning—in ſhort, after that, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed at any thing. But tell me, my dear Stukely, tell me truly, do you think that you will be able to give them enough of it? Do you think our plan will ſucceed?

Har. I'll be bound for it, Sir. If there are any more plays acted in your houſe after this, I will conſent to loſe my head.

Sir Gil. Then give them as much of it to-night as you can—Do not ſpare them, Stukely. But come, let us go in to tea. Diggery is hard at work, fixing the ſcenes in the hall, and the whole neighbourhood will be here by-and-bye. Come along. [*Exeunt, talking.*

SCENE, *A room in the Houſe.*

Enter Kitty, *ſinging.*

Kit. This Charles, notwithſtanding my ſinging, now and then makes me melancholy. He is ſo lively, and ſo tragic, and ſo comic, and ſo humourſome, and ſo every thing like myſelf, that I am much happier with him than any body elſe. Heigh ho! What makes me ſigh ſo, when I chooſe ſinging?—Tol, lol, lol, la—But here he is.

En-

Enter Charles.

Cha. Come to my arms, thou loveliest of thy sex!

Kit. Keep off, Charles, I bid you; you must not lay hold on me in such a monstrous way; that's just like Cymon.

Cha. What do I hear? Death to my hopes, Cymon! Does Cymon lay hold of my dear Kitty!

Kit. To be sure. When I have no other person to rehearse with, I do take Cymon; and he does not perform badly, when I instruct him.

Cha. But don't you think you had better take me? Don't you imagine my performance would please you better than his?

Kit. How can I tell, until I try you both. If you will give me a specimen, I'll soon tell you—Try now.

Cha. What the devil shall I say? I do not immediately recollect a line of a play. No matter, the first thing that comes into my head. [*Aside.* Come then, Kitty, you must play with me. Now mind me—Hear me, thou fairest of the fair—hear me, dear goddess, hear—

Kit. Stop, stop; I do not know where that is.

Cha. Nor I, upon my soul. [*Aside.*] What, do you not recollect where that is?

Kit. No. Can you repeat a speech out of Romeo, Crook-back'd Richard, the Conscious Lovers, Scrub, the Journey to London, the Clandestine Marriage, the School for Wives—

Cha. Stop, stop; yes, yes, Kitty, I have the Journey to London, the Clandestine Marriage, and the School for Wives, strong at this moment in my recollection. I think I can do—

Kit. What then, you only think, you're not certain? Lord, Lord! I do not believe you can do any thing—Why, Cymon, could say them all without missing a word. I only desired him, after supper, a few nights ago, to go into the barn, and get by heart the speech where the blackamoor smothers his wife; and I had not been in bed ten minutes when he came into the room, and repeated every word of it.

Cha. The devil he did!

Kit. Ay, and more than that.

Cha.

Cha. What more, in the devil's name?

Kit. Why to be ſure, he was as black as old Harry, that's certain. He had black'd all his face with ſoot and gooſe-dripping; and he did look ſo charmingly frightful! But then he did play ſo well—He laid down the candle, and came up to the bed-ſide, and ſaid—"One "kiſs, and then."

Cha. What then?

Kit. Why then "put out the light." Why, Charles, you know no more how to act this ſcene than Tippet.

Cha. And, pray, my dear Kitty, what does Sir Gilbert ſay to all this?

Kit. Why, he'd never known a word of it, if it was not that it diſcovered itſelf.

Cha. How came that? You tell me it was but a few nights ago, and I do not think it could diſcover itſelf ſo ſoon.

Kit. Why, you muſt know, that when Cymon kiſſed me in bed, he blacked my left cheek ſo abominably, that when I came down to breakfaſt in the morning, the family were all frightened out of their wits. Mrs Bridget bid me go to the glaſs; and when I looked at myſelf—Lord, Lord, how I did laugh! I told them the whole ſtory. And do you know, that I am locked into my room every night ſince.

Cha. So much the better. This is ſimplicity without vice. [*Aſide.*]—Well, Kitty, you ſhall ſee this evening, how I'll play Captain Macheath. I am quite perfect in the Captain.

Kit. And I have Polly every morſel of her—Lord, how all the country-folks will ſtare! Miſs Fanny Blubber, the rich farmer's daughter in the next village, is to play Lucy; ſhe will do it charmingly, and, as luck would have it, ſhe is now big with child.

Cha. Really! was ever any thing ſo lucky?

Kit. Are you ſure now, that you will not be out?

Cha. You ſhall ſee now—Come, lean on my ſhoulder—Look fond—quite languiſhing—That will do.—What do you ſay now? Have you forgot?

Kit. That I hav'n't—"And are you as fond as ever, my dear?"

Cha. Suſpect my honour, my courage; ſuſpect any thing

thing but my love. May my piſtols want charging, and my mare ſlip her ſhoes—No, I'm wrong—Zounds! Oh, I have it—" May my piſtols miſs fire, and my mare ſlip " her ſhoulder while I am purſued, if ever I forſake " thee."

Kit. Oh, thou charming, charming creature!

[*Kiſſes him.*

Cha. Damme, but this girl has given me the touch I believe. She has ſet me all in a flame. [*Aſide.*]—But tell me, Kitty, have you thought upon what I ſaid to you in the garden?

Kit. 'Egad I have; but I don't know what's the matter with me; ſomething comes acroſs me, and frightens all my inclination away.

Cha. Be reſolute, my dear Kitty, and take to your arms the man who only can live when he is in your preſence. Heav'ns! is it poſſible, that ſuch a girl as you —a creature formed—

Kit. Lord! am I a creature?

Cha. Ay, and a lovely creature; formed for the delight of our ſex, and the envy of your's. To be cag'd up in ſuch a damn'd old barn as this! ſeeing no company but Cymon, Wat, Diggery, Ducklin, and ſuch canibals!

Kit. Oh, monſtrous!

Cha. 'Tis more than monſtrous; 'tis ſhocking.

Kit. Is it indeed!

Cha. To be ſure.

Lit. Then I will do as you bid me from this moment.

Cha. Come to my arms, and let me hold thee to my heart for ever. [*Embraces her.*] " If I were now to die, " 'twere now to be moſt happy; for I fear my ſoul hath " her content ſo abſolute, that not another comfort like " this ſucceeds in unknown fate."

Enter Sir Gilbert.

Sir Gil. Hollo! what the devil, are you two at it already? Why, Charles, are you not afraid ſhe will bite you?

Cha. Not in the leaſt, Sir. If I don't make her out of humour with this kind of mumming, before ſhe is twenty-four hours older, I will forfeit my commiſſion.

Sir.

Sir Gil. If you do, I promiſe you a better. What noiſe is that? [*A board is heard ſawing without.*

Kit. It is only Diggery ſawing a trap-hole in the floor of the hall. You know we can't play tragedy without it.

Sir Gil. Death and hell! we ſhall have the houſe about our ears preſently—Mercy upon us!—Diggery, thou imp of the devil, give over. Charles, do you ſtop him. [*Exit* Charles.] Who could have thought of ſuch an infernal ſcheme?

Re-enter Charles.

O Charles, Charles! cure the family of this madneſs, and I will make your fortune for you."

Cha. He had only began his work, there can be no miſchief done, Sir.

Sir Gil. Thank you, thank you, Charles. As for you, Miſs Kitty, do you come with me; the folks will be all here preſently.

[Sir Gilbert *puts her arm under his; ſhe ſeizes* Charles's *hand, and imitates the ſcene in the Beggar's Opera where Peachum drags his daughter from Macheath.*

Kit. "Do not tear him from me." Isn't that right, Charles?

Cha. Aſtoniſhing!

Sir Gil. What the devil's the matter now?

Kit. [*Sings.*] "Oh, Oh, ray! Oh, Ambora! Oh, "Oh!" [*Exeunt* Sir Gil. *and* Kitty.

Cha. Well, certainly there does not exiſt ſuch an unaccountable family as this. As to the girl, ſhe is a compoſition of ſhrewdneſs and ſimplicity; and if properly treated, would make an excellent wife. She has thirty thouſand pounds to her fortune, and every ſhilling at her diſpoſal. What an old curmugeon is my uncle, who might provide for his nephew, without putting a ſhilling out of his own pocket, by beſtowing this girl upon him; and never once to hint at ſuch an union—No matter—Ill take this little charming girl to my arms, and make a *coup de main* of it. "Then, farewel the neighing ſteed, "and the ſhrill trump; the ſpirit-ſtirring drum, the ear-"piercing fife, the royal banner, and all quality, pride, "pomp, and circumſtance of glorious war."

En

Enter Harry.

Har. Bravo, bravo, Charles! The touch, I fancy, has gone round the whole family.

Cha. 'Egad, I believe ſo too, Harry. I have got it, you find.

Har. I have been looking for you this half hour. Such a ſcene as I have had with old Mouſer!

Cha. Ay, but ſuch a ſcene as I have had with the kitten! 'Egad, Harry! I have her, in ſpite of all her tricks—But who do you think popp'd upon us at the critical moment?

Har. Critical moment!

Cha. Juſt as I had the lovely girl in my arms, repeating to her the firſt ſpeech that came into my head, in popp'd old Jowler, my uncle.

Har. Why, he caught me much in the ſame ſituation in the garden? I was kneeling, kiſſing Miſs Bridget's old damn'd withered fiſt, and ſwearing by all the goddeſſes, their friends and relations, when plump he came upon us: no miſchief enſued; for he thought I was giving her a ſpecimen of my abilities in acting. She humoured the idea as completely as if ſhe had but juſt come from a London boarding-ſchool; and the good old knight deſired me, to ſurfeit her, to give her a little more of it.

Cha. "This night makes me, or undoes me quite."

Har. Good again, Charles——Damme but I think you would make a tolerable actor in good earneſt.

Cha. I think I ſhould; and you will ſhortly have a ſpecimen of my abilities, in the character of a good huſband.

Enter William, *with a Letter.*

Will. I received this letter, Sir, from a hoſtler, who belongs to an inn in the next village; he waits for an anſwer Sir.

Cha. What can this mean? I know no perſon hereabouts, except my uncle's family. Let us ſee. [*Reads.*

"I this moment heard you was in the country upon "a viſit at your uncle's; and as I propoſe ſtaying here "to-night, (being heartily fatigued with my journey), "will be much obliged, if you will favour me with your "company to ſupper: I am alone; but if the family

" cannot ſpare you, I muſt inſiſt you will uſe no cere-
" mony with your old and ſincere friend,

" JOE TACKUM."

Angels catch the ſounds!

Har. With all my heart—but what's the matter?

Cha. Who do you think is by accident arrived at the next village?

Har. Who, who?—You put me in a fever.

Cha. Joe Tackum, my old fellow-collegian who took orders not a month ago, and who, I ſuppoſe, is now going to his father's—Fly, William; get me pen, ink, and paper: he muſt not ſtir from the place he now is at, to get a biſhopric. [*Exeunt* Charles *and* William.

Har. Let me ſee now; can't I find ſome paſſage that will be *àpropos?* If Diggery were here, he would find twenty in a minute—Oh, I have it—" If it were done " when 'tis done; then would it were done quickly—" 'tis a conſummation devoutly to be wiſhed." No, no, no, I'm all wrong—Damme, if ever I attempt to ſpout again while I live. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *The Hall, with Benches fixed to ſee the Play.* Sir Gilbert, Diggery, *&c. are perceived buſtling and receiving the company.*

Sir Gil. Welcome, my good friends; welcome, ladies and gentlemen. Diggery, don't be mumbling your nonſenſe, but ſeat the company—You are all moſt heartily welcome—How do your like our preparation?

Comp. Oh, 'tis charming—Indeed, Sir Gilbert, 'tis charming.

Sir Gil. Don't be mumbling, Diggery, I ſay, but look about and obſerve the company. Pray, ſit down all of you, or we can't begin our paſtimes; the actors will be here ſhortly. Diggery, where's my nephew and his friend? Where's Kitty too?

Dig. She is juſt ſtepped out with Charles.

Sir Gil. Ay, ay, to rehearſe their parts together, ſo much the better. After this night, I ſhall take care they have no rehearſing of their tragedies, and comedies, and love-dialogues; I'll put an end to this tinder-work buſineſs—But come, come; buſtle about, Diggery, get yourſelf ready, and deſire them all to begin; we

we have no time to loſe. Now, neighbours, you ſhall ſee the Beggar's Opera in taſte.

Dig. Here they are, here they are.

Enter Charles, Kitty, *and* Harry.

Har. Are you ſure none of the family know you are married?

Cha. Not a ſoul; but they ſhall all know it now—— [Charles *and* Kitty *go up to* Sir Gilbert, *and kneel.*] Sir, this young lady, who is now my wife, joins with me in requeſting your bleſſing and forgiveneſs.

Dig. No, no, no; you are all wrong; you are to confeſs the marriage at the end of the third act—We begin at the wrong end. [Charles *and* Kitty *riſe.*

Enter Miſs Bridget, *in a rage.*

Miſs Brid. Brother, brother, we are all undone—— Oh, Kitty, you are a ſad ſlut—The wench is married, brother!

Dig. Why, Mrs Bridget, you are wrong too; you are to ſay that by-and-bye.

Sir Gil. You came in too ſoon, ſiſter Bridget; you have forgot.

Miſs Brid. I tell you, brother, the wench is married—Are you ſtupid?

Sir Gil. I tell you again, ſiſter Bridget, you are too ſoon; that rage will do well enough preſently—— Diggery ſhall tell you when to come.——This fooliſh woman ſpoils all—I have ſeen the Beggar's Opera a thouſand times.

Miſs Brid. Was ever any thing equal to this? I'll raiſe the neighbourhood—Murder! Robbery! Raviſhment!—Bleſs me, how my head turns round—

[*They all riſe and aſſiſt* Miſs Bridget, *who faints in a chair.*

Dig. I never ſaw any thing better acted in all my life.

Sir Gil. Very well, ſiſter, indeed! Bounce away! I did not think it was you—Very well, indeed! ha, ha, ha! [Bridget *ſhows great agitation.*

Dig. 'Tis very fine, indeed!—I wiſh I may do my part half as well.

Miſs Brid. I ſhall go mad! You crazy fool you, hold your tongue, or I will—[*runs at* Diggery.] As for you, brother—

Sir Gil. No, no; now you are out.

Dig. You ſhould not meddle with me.

Miſs Brid. I tell you, dolt, fool, that your niece there, that impudent baggage, is married to that more impudent fellow, your nephew.

Sir Gil. What is all this!

Dig. This is not in the play.

Miſs Brid. No; but it is in nature for ſuch creatures to deceive and be wicked. She is married, I tell you.

Sir Gil. The devil ſhe is!—It is a lie though.

Dig. Then we ſhall have a tragedy inſtead of a comedy.

Sir Gil. Speak, ſpeak, you graceleſs pair of imps! What is all this?

Har. Indeed it is true, Sir Gilbert, as I can bear witneſs.

Sir Gil. It can't be; 'tis all a lie—Parſon Doſey would not have done ſuch a thing for his other eye, and there's no other in the neighbourhood.

Har. It was not parſon Doſey, that did the kind office, but honeſt Joe Tackum.

Sir Gil. And pray who the devil is honeſt Joe Tackum?

Cha. A friend of mine, Sir, whom I detained for the purpoſe.

Kit. Dear guardie, forgive me for this time; and I'll never do it again. [*Kneeling.*

Miſs Brid. Did you ever hear any thing ſo profligate and deſtitute? Oh, you'll turn out finely, Miſs!—To deceive us all—What, guilty of ſuch an abomination, in ſo ſhort a time, and at your age.

Sir Gil. What ſay you to that, cockatrice, in ſo *ſhort a time, and at your age?*

Dig. I don't think it out of character, though. [*Aſide.*

Kit. Pray, Madam, excuſe me; is *it not quite as bad to do it in ſo ſhort a time, and at your age?*

Miſs Brid. What do you mean, you impertinent ſlut?

Sir Gil. Ay, what do you mean, Miſs Hot-upon't?

Kit. Aſk this gentleman, pray.

Sir.

Sir Gil. Why, what the devil, ſiſter!

[*She looks confounded.*

Har. Since I am ſubpœna'd into court, I muſt ſpeak the truth. That lady, *in ſo ſhort a time, and at her age,* offered her hand for the ſame trip to matrimony; but I was not in a humour for travelling.

Miſs Brid. You are all a parcel of knaves, fools, and impertinent huſſies—I'll never ſee your faces again.

[*Exit.*

Sir Gil. You ought to be aſhamed to ſhow your own, Miſs Bridget.

Dig. It is all in character.

Cha. Conſider, Sir, I am your nephew, and my proſperity ought to give you pleaſure: beſides, I ſhall not want any thing from you in your will; I am now well provided for.

Sir G. 'Egad, that's a juſt obſervation. [*Aſide.*]—Well, as my ſiſter, who ought to be wiſer, would have done the ſame, I will forgive the leſs offence. [*Kiſſes her.*] Make her a good huſband, Charles: and permit me to recommend one thing to you; let her never read a play, or go within the doors of a theatre; if you do, I would not underwrite her.

Cha. "My life upon her faith."

THE CONTRIVANCES.

By HARRY CAREY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

	Covent-Garden.
Argus, father to Arethusa, -	Mr Collins.
Hearty, father to Rovewell, - -	Mr Arthur.
Rovewell, in love with Arethusa, -	Mr Lowe.
Robin, servant to Rovewell, - -	Mr Stoppelaer.
First Mob, - - -	
Second Mob, - - -	
Third Mob, - - -	
Women Mob, - - -	
Boy. - - - -	Mr Settree.

WOMEN.

Arethusa, in love with Rovewell, -	Mrs Chambers.
Betty, her maid. - -	Mrs Green.

SCENE, *London*.

SCENE, Rovewell's *Lodgings*.

ROBIN *solus*.

ROBIN.

WELL, though pimping is the moſt honourable and profitable of all profeſſions, it is certainly the moſt dangerous and fatiguing; but of all fatigues there's none like following a virtuous miſtreſs—There's not one letter I carry, but I run the riſk of kicking, caning, or pumping, nay, often hanging——Let me ſee; I have committed three burglaries to get one letter to her——Now, if my maſter ſhould not get the gypſey

at

at laſt, I have ventur'd my ſweet perſon to a fair purpoſe—But, Baſta! here comes my maſter and his friend Mr Hearty——I muſt haſten and get our diſguiſes.

And if Dame Fortune fail us now to win her,
Oh, all ye gods above! the devil's in her. [*Exit.*

Enter Rovewell *and* Hearty.

Hear. Why ſo melancholy, Captain? Come, come, a man of your gaiety and courage ſhou'd never take a diſappointment ſo much to heart.

Rov. 'Sdeath! to be prevented when I had brought my deſign ſo near perfection!

Hear. Were you leſs open and daring in your attempts, you might hope to ſucceed—The old gentleman, you know, is cautious to a degree; his daughter under a ſtrict confinement: would you uſe more of the fox than the lion, Fortune, perhaps, might throw an opportunity in your way—But you muſt have patience.

Rov. Who can have patience when danger is ſo near? Read this letter, and then tell me what room there is for patience.

Hearty reads,

" To-morrow will prevent all our vain ſtruggles to " get to each other.——I am then to be marry'd, to " my eternal averſion; you know the ſop, 'tis Cuckoo, " who, having a large eſtate, is forc'd upon me; but my " heart can be none but Rovewell's. Immediately after " the receipt of this, meet Betty at the old place; there " is yet one invention left; if you purſue it cloſely, you " may perhaps releaſe her who wou'd be your——

" ARETHUSA."

Rov. Yes, Arethuſa, I will releaſe thee, or die in the attempt. Dear friend, excuſe my rudeneſs; you know the reaſon.

A I R.

I'll face ev'ry danger
To reſcue my dear,
For fear is a ſtranger
Where love is ſincere.
Repulſes but fire us,
Deſpair we deſpiſe,
If beauty inſpire us
To pant for the prize. [*Exit.*

Hear.

Hear. Well, go thy way, and get her; for thou deſerv'ſt her, o' my conſcience.——How have I been deceiv'd in this boy! I find him the very reverſe of what his ſtep-mother repreſented him; and am now ſenſible it was only her ill uſage that forc'd my child away—His not having ſeen me ſince he was five years old, renders me a perfect ſtranger to him—Under that pretence I have got into his acquaintauce, and find him all I wiſh——If this plot of his fails, I believe my money muſt buy him the girl at laſt. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *A Chamber in* Argus's *Houſe.*
Arethuſa *ſola.*

A I R.

Are. See! the radiant queen of night
Sheds on all her kindly beams;
Gilds the plains with cheerful light,
And ſparkles in the ſilver ſtreams.
Smiles adorn the face of Nature,
Taſteleſs all things yet appear,
Unto me a hapeleſs creature,
In the abſence of my dear.

Enter Argus.

Arg. Pray, daughter, what linguo is that ſame you chant and ſputter out at this rate?

Are. Engliſh, Sir,

Arg. Engliſh, quotha! adod I took it to be nonſenſe.

Are. 'Tis a hymn to the Moon.

Arg. A hymn to the Moon! I'll have none of your hymns in my houſe—Give me the book, houſewife.

Are. I hope, Sir, there is no crime in reading a harmleſs poem.

Arg. Give me the book, I ſay; poems, with a pox! what are they good for, but to blow up the fire of love, and make young wenches wanton?——But I have taken care of you, miſtreſs! for to-morrow you ſhall have a huſband to ſtay your ſtomach, and no leſs a perſon than 'ſquire Cuckoo.

Are. You will not, ſurely, be ſo cruel as to marry me to a man I cannot love.

Arg.

Arg. Why, what ſort of a man wou'd you have, Mrs Minx?

A I R

Are. Genteel in perſonage,
Conduct in equipage,
Noble by heritage,
Generous and free.
Brave, not romantic;
Learn'd, not pedantic;
Frolic, not frantic;
This muſt be he.
Honour maintaining,
Meanneſs diſdaining,
Still entertaining,
Engaging and new.
Neat, but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical;
But ever true.

Arg. Why, is not Mr Cuckoo all this? Adod he's a briſk young fellow, and a little feather-bed doctrine will ſoon put the Captain out of your head; and to put you out of his power, you ſhall be given over to the 'ſquire to-morrow.

Are. Surely, Sir, you will at leaſt defer it one day.

Arg. No, nor one hour——To-morrow morning, at eight of the clock preciſely.——In the mean time, take notice the 'ſquire's ſiſter is hourly expected; ſo pray do you be civil and ſociable with her, and let me have none of your pouts and glouts, as you tender my diſpleaſure.

[*Exit.*

Are. To-morrow is ſhort warning; but we may be too cunning for you yet, old gentleman.

Enter Betty.

Are. O Betty! welcome a thouſand times! what news? have you ſeen the Captain?

Betty. Yes, Madam; and if you were to ſee him in his new rigging, you'd ſplit your ſides with laughing—Such a hoyden, ſuch a piece of country-ſtuff, you never ſet your eyes on——But the petticoats are ſoon thrown off; and if good luck attends us, you may eaſily conjure

Miſs

Miſs Malkin, the 'ſquire's ſiſter, into your own dear captain.

Are. But when will they come?

Bet. Inſtantly, Madam; he only ſtays to ſettle matters for our eſcape. He's in deep conſultation with his privy-counſellor Robin, who is to attend him in the quality of a country put——They'll both be here in a moment; ſo let's in, and pack up the jewels, that we may be ready at once to leap into the ſaddle of liberty, and ride full ſpeed to your deſires.

Are. Dear Betty, let's make haſte; I think every moment an age till I'm free from this bondage.

A I R.

When parents obſtinate and cruel prove,
And force us to a man we cannot love,
'Tis fit we diſappoint the ſordid elves,
And wiſely get us huſbands for ourſelves.

Bet. There they are——in, in.

[*A knocking without.*

Argus *from above.*

Arg. You're woundy haſty, methinks, to knock at that rate—This is certainly ſome courtier come to borrow money, I know it by the ſaucy rapping of the footman——Who's at the door?

Rob. Tummos! [*Without doors.*

Arg. Tummos! who's *Tummos?* Who wou'd you ſpeak with, friend?

Rob. With young maſter's vather-in-law that mun be, maſter *Hardguts?*

Arg. And what's your buſineſs with maſter *Hardguts?*

Rob. Why, young miſtreſs is come out o' the country to ſee brother's wife that mun be, that's all.

Arg. Odſo, the 'ſquire's ſiſter; I'm ſorry I made her wait ſo long. [*Goes down and lets 'em in.*

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Argus *introducing* Rovewell *in woman's cloaths, followed by* Robin *as a Clown.*

Arg. Save you, fair lady, you're welcome to town. [Rovewell *curtſeys.*]——A very modeſt maiden, truly.—How long have you been in town?

Rob.

Rob. Why an hour and a bit or ſo——we juſt put up horſes at King's-Arms yonder, and ſtaid a crum to zee poor things feed, for your London oſtlers give little enough to poor beaſts; an' you ſtond not by 'em your zell, and ſee 'em fed, as ſoon as your back's turn'd, adod they'll cheat you afore your face.

Arg. Why how now, Clodpate? are you to ſpeak before your miſtreſs, and with your hat on, too? Is that your country-breeding?

Rob. Why, an' 'tis on, 'tis on, an' 'tis off, 'tis off—what cares Tummos for your falſe-hearted London compliments? An' you'd have an anſwer from young miſtreſs, you mun look to Tummos; for ſhe's ſo main baſhful, ſhe never ſpeaks one word but her prayers, and thos'n ſo ſoftly that nobody can hear her.

Arg. I like her the better for that; ſilence is a heavenly virtue in a woman, but very rare to be found in this wicked place.——Have you ſeen your brother, pretty lady, ſince you came to town? [Rovewell *curtſeys.*] O miraculous modeſty! wou'd all women were thus! Can't you ſpeak, Madam?

[Rovewell *curtſeys again.*

Rob. An' you get a word from her, 'tis more nor ſhe has ſpoken to us theſe fourſcore and ſeven long miles; but young miſtreſs will prate faſt enough, an' you ſet her among your women volk.

Arg. Say'ſt thou ſo, honeſt fellow? I'll ſend her to thoſe that have tongue enough, I'll warrant you. Here, Betty!

Enter Betty.

Take this young lady to my daughter; 'tis 'ſquire Cuckoo's ſiſter; and, d'ye hear, make much of her, I charge you.

Bet. Yes, Sir——Pleaſe to follow me, Madam.

Rov. Now, you rogue, for a lie an hour and a half long, to keep the old fellow in ſuſpenſe. [*Aſide* to Robin.] [*Exit with* Betty.

Rob. Well, maſter! don't you think my miſtreſs a dainty young woman?—She's wonderfully bemir'd in our country for her ſhapes.

Arg. Oh, ſhe's a fine creature, indeed!—But where's the 'ſquire, honeſt friend?

Rob.

Rob. Why, one cannot find a man out in this ſame Londonſhire, there are ſo many taveruns and chocklin houſen; you may as well ſeek a needle in a hay fardel, as they ſay'n i' the country.—I was at 'ſquire's lodging yonder, and there was nobody but a prat apace whorſon of a foot-boy, and he told me maiſter was at chockling-houſe, and all the while the vixon did nothing but taunt and laugh at me:——I'cod I could have found in my heart to have gi'n him a good wherrit in the chops. So I went to one chockling-houſe, and t'other chockling-houſe, till I was quite weary; and I could ſee nothing but a many people ſupping hot ſuppings, and reading your gazing papers: we had much ado to find out your worſhip's houſe; the vixon boys ſet us o'thick ſide, and that ſide, till we were quite almoſt loſt; an' it were not for an honeſt fellow that know'd your worſhip, and ſet us i' the right way.

Arg. 'Tis pity they ſhould uſe ſtrangers ſo; but as to your young miſtreſs, does ſhe never ſpeak?

Rob. Adod, Sir, never to a mon; why, ſhe wo'not ſpeak to her own father, ſhe's ſo main baſhful.

Aug. That's ſtrange, indeed! But how does my friend, Sir Roger? he's well, I hope?

Rob. Hearty ſtill, Sir——He has drunk down ſix fox-hunters ſin laſt Lammas!—He holds his old courſe ſtill; twenty pipes a-day, a cup of mum in the morning, a tankard of ale at noon, and three bottles of ſtingo at night. The ſame mon now he was thirty years ago; and young ſquire Yedward is juſt come from varſity; lawd, he's mainly grow'd ſin you ſaw him: he's a fine proper tall gentleman now; why he's near upon as tall as you or I, mun.

Arg. Good now, good now! But would'ſt drink, honeſt friend?

Rob. I don't care an' I do, a bit or ſo; for, to ſay truth, I'm mortal dry.

Arg. Here, John!

Enter Servant.

Take this honeſt fellow down, and make him welcome. When your miſtreſs is ready to go, we'll call you.

Rob. Ah! pray take care and make much of me, for

I am a bitter honeſt fellow and you did but know me.
[*Exit* Robin *with* Serv.

Arg. Theſe country fellows are very blunt, but very honeſt. I wou'd fain hear his miſtreſs talk. He ſaid ſhe'd find her tongue when ſhe was amongſt thoſe of her own ſex.—I'll go liſten for once, and hear what the young tits have to ſay to one another. [*Exit.*

Enter Rovewell, Arethuſa, *and* Betty.

Rov. Dear Arethuſa, delay not the time thus, your father will certainly come in and ſurpriſe us.

Bet. Let us make hay while the ſun ſhines, Madam: I long to be out of this priſon.

Are. So do I; but not on the Captain's conditions, to be his priſoner for life.

Rove. I ſhall run mad if you trifle thus: name your conditions; I ſign my conſent before-hand. [*Kiſſes her.*

Are. Indeed, captain, I'm afraid to truſt you.

A I R.

Ceaſe to perſuade,
Nor ſay you love ſincerely;
When you've betray'd,
You'll treat me moſt ſeverely,
And fly what once you did purſue.
Happy the fair
Who ne'er believes you,
But gives deſpair,
Or elſe deceives you,
And learns inconſtancy from you.

Rov. Unkind Arethuſa! I little expected this uſage from you.

A I R.

When did you ſee
Any falſehood in me,
That thus you unkindly ſuſpect me?
Speak, ſpeak your mind;
For I fear you're inclin'd,
In ſpite of my truth, to reject me.
If it muſt be ſo,
To the wars I will go,
Where danger my paſſion ſhall ſmother;
I'd rather periſh there,

Than linger in deſpair,
Or ſee you in the arms of another.

Enter Argus *behind.*

Arg. So, ſo, this is as it ſhould be; they are as gracious as can be already——How the young tit ſmuggles her! Adod, ſhe kiſſes with a hearty good-will.

Are. I muſt confeſs, Captain, I am half inclin'd to believe you.

Arg. Captain! how's this! bleſs my eye-ſight! I know the villain now; but I'll be even with him.

Bet. Dear Madam, don't trifle ſo; the parſon's at the very next door, you'll be tack'd together in an inſtant; and then I'll truſt you to come back to your cage again, if you can do it with a ſafe conſcience.

Arg. Here's a treacherous jade! but I'll do your buſineſs for you, Mrs Jezebel.

Bet. Conſider, Madam, what a life you lead here; what a jealous, ill-natured, watchful, covetous, barbarous, old cuff of a father you have to deal with——What a glorious opportunity this is, and what a ſad, ſad, very ſad thing it is to die a maid!

'AIR.

'Would you live a ſtale virgin for ever?
'Sure you're out of your ſenſes,
'Or theſe are pretences;
'Can you part with a perſon ſo clever?
'In troth you are highly to blame.
'And you, Mr Lover, to trifle;
'I thought that a ſoldier,
'Was wiſer and bolder!
'A warrior ſhould plunder and rifle;
'A captain! Oh, fie for ſhame!'

Arg. If that jade dies a maid, I'll die a martyr.

Bet. In ſhort, Madam, if you ſtay much longer, you may repent it every vein in your heart——The old hunks will undoubtedly pop in upon us and diſcover all, and then we're undone for ever.

Arg. You may go to the devil for ever, Mrs Impudence.

Are. Well, Captain, if you ſhou'd deceive me.

Rov.

Rov. If I do, may heaven———

Are. Nay, no ſwearing, Captain, for fear you ſhould prove like the reſt of your ſex.

Rov. How can you doubt me, Arethuſa, when you know how much I love you?

Arg. A wheedling dog! But I'll ſpoil his ſport anon.

Bet. Come, come away, dear Madam!—I have the jewels; but ſtay, I'll go firſt, and ſee if the coaſt be clear. [Argus *meets her.*

Arg. Where are you a-going, pretty maiden?

Bet. Only do—do—do—down ſtairs, Sir.

Arg. And what haſt thou got there, child?

Bet. Nothing but pi—pi—pi—pins, Sir.

Arg. Here, give me the pins, and do you go to hell, Mrs Minx. D'ye hear, out of my houſe this moment; theſe are chamber-jades, forſooth———*O tempora! O mores!* what an age is this? Get you in, forſooth, I'll talk with you anon. [*Exit* Arethuſa.] So, Captain, are thoſe your regimental cloaths? I'll aſſure you they become you mightily. If you did but ſee yourſelf now, how much like a hero you look! *Ecce ſignum!* ha! ha! ha!

Rov. Blood and fury! ſtop your grinning, or I'll ſtretch your mouth with a vengeance.

Arg. Nay, nay, captain Belſwagger, if you're ſo paſſionate, 'tis high time to call aid and aſſiſtance: here, Richard, Thomas, John, help me to lay hold on this fellow; you have no ſword now, captain, no ſword, d'ye mark me?

Enter Servants and Robin.

Rov. But I have a piſtol, Sir, at your ſervice.

[*Pulls out a piſtol.*

Arg. O Lord! O Lord!

Rov. And I'll unload it in your breaſt, if you ſtir one ſtep after me.

Arg. A bloody-minded dog! But lay hold on that rogue there, that country-cheat.

Rob. See here, gentlemen, are two little bull-dogs of the ſame breed, [*preſenting two piſtols;*] they are wonderful ſcourers of the brain;——ſo that if you offer to moleſt or follow me——you underſtand me, gentlemen; you underſtand me.

1 *Ser.* Yes, yes, we underſtand you, with a pox.

2 *Ser.* The devil go with 'em, I say.

Arg. Ay, ay, good-by to you, in the devil's name. —A terrible dog! what a fright he has put me in!—— I shan't be myself this month. And you, ye cowardly rascals, to stand by and see my life in danger; get out, ye slaves, out of my house, I say——I'll put an end to all this; for I'll not have a servant in the house.——I'll carry all the keys in my pocket, and never sleep more. What a murdering son of a whore is this! But I'll prevent him; for to-morrow she shall be marry'd certainly, and then my furious gentleman can have no hopes left. ——A Jezebel, to have a red-coat without any money! ——Had he but money, if he wanted sense, manners, or even manhood itself, it matter'd not a pin;——but to want money is the devil! Well, I'll secure her under lock and key till to morrow; and if her husband can't keep her from captain-hunting, e'en let her bring him home a fresh pair of horns ev'ry time she goes out upon the chace. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Arethusa *discover'd sitting melancholy on a couch.*

AIR.

O leave me to complain
My loss of liberty;
I never more shall see my swain,
Nor ever more be free.
O cruel, cruel Fate!
What joy can I receive,
When in the arms of one I hate,
I'm doom'd, alas! to live?
Ye pitying pow'rs above,
That see my soul's dismay,
O! bring me back the man I love,
Or take my life away.

Enter Argus.

Arg. So, lady! you're welcome home!——See how the pretty turtle sits moaning the loss of her mate! ——What, not a word, Thusy? not a word, child? Come, come, don't be in the dumps now, and I'll fetch the captain, or the squire's sister; perhaps they may make it prattle a bit——Ah, ungracious girl! Is all my care come to this? Is this the gratitude you show your uncle's

uncle's memory, to throw away what he had buſtled ſo hard for at ſo mad a rate? Did he leave you 12,000 l. think you, to make you no better than a ſoldier's trull? to follow a camp? to carry a knapſack? This is what you'd have, Miſtreſs, is it not?

Are. This, and ten thouſand times worſe, were better with the man I love, than to be chain'd to the nauſeous embraces of one I hate.

Arg. A very dutiful lady, indeed! I'll make you ſing another ſong to-morrow; and till then, I'll leave you *in ſalva cuſtodia* to conſider.——B'ye, Thuſy!

Are. How barbarous is the covetouſneſs and caution of ill-natur'd parents! They toil for eſtates with a view to make poſterity happy; and then, by miſtaken prudence, they match us to our averſion. But I am reſolved not to ſuffer tamely, however.———They ſhall ſee, though my body's weak, my reſolution's ſtrong; and I may yet find ſpirit enough to plague them.

A I R.

Sooner than I'll my love forego,
And loſe the man I prize,
I'll bravely combat ev'ry woe,
Or fall a ſacrifice.
Nor bolts, nor bars, ſhall me controul,
I death and danger dare;
Reſtraint but fires the active ſoul,
And urges fierce deſpair.
The window now ſhall be my gate,
I'll either fall or fly;
Before I live with him I hate,
For him I love I'll die. [*Adieu.*

SCENE, *The Street.*

'Hearty *and* Rovewell *meeting.*

'*Rov.* So, my dear friend, here already?——This is 'very kind.

'*Hear.* Sure, Captain, this lady muſt have ſome ex'traordinary merit for whom you undertake ſuch diffi'culties! What are her particular charms beſides her "money?

'*Rov.* I'll tell you, Sir.

'AIR. *The words by another hand.*

'Without affectation, gay, youthful, and pretty;
'Without pride or meanness, familiar and witty;
'Without forms, obliging, good-natur'd, and free;
'Without art, as lovely as lovely can be.
'She acts what she thinks, and she thinks what she says,
'Regardless alike both of censure and praise;
'Her thoughts, and her words, and her actions, are such,
'That none can admire 'em, or praise her too much.

'*Hear.* Well, success attend you——You know 'where to find me when there's occasion? [*Exit.*'

Enter Rovewell *and* Boy.

Boy. Sir, Sir! I want to speak with you.

Rov. Is your mistress lock'd up, say you?

Boy. Yes, Sir, and Betty's turn'd away, and all the men-servants; and there's no living soul in the house but our old cook-maid, and I, and my master, and Mrs Thusy; and she cries, and cries her eyes out almost.

Rov. O the tormenting news! But if the garrison is so weak, the castle may be the sooner storm'd. How did you get out?

Boy. Through the kitchen-window, Sir.

Rov. Show me the window presently.

Boy. Alack-a-day, it won't do, Sir! That plot won't take!

Rov. Why, sirrah?

Boy. You are something too big, Sir.

Rov. I'll try that, however.

Boy. Indeed, Sir, you can't get your leg in; but I could put you in a way.

Rov. How, dear boy?

Boy. I can lend you the keys of Mrs Thusy's chamber——If you can contrive to get into the house——But you must be sure to let my mistress out.

Rov. How could'st thou get it? This is almost a miracle.

Boy. I pick'd it out of my master's coat-pocket this morning, Sir, as I was a-brushing him.

Rov That's my boy! there's money for you: this child will come to good in time.

Boy.

Boy. My maſter will miſs me, Sir; I muſt go; but I wiſh you good luck. [*Exit.*

A I R.

Arethuſa *at the window above.*

A dialogue between her and Rovewell.

Rov. Make haſte and away, my only dear;
Make haſte, and away, away!
For all at the gate,
Your true lover does wait,
And I prithee make no delay.

Are. O how ſhall I ſteal away, my love?
O how ſhall I ſteal away?
My daddy is near,
And I dare not for fear;
Pray, come then another day.

Rov. O this is the only day, my life,
O this is the only day!
I'll draw him aſide,
While you throw the gates wide,
And then you may ſteal away.

Are. Then prithee make no delay, my dear;
Then prithee make no delay:
We'll ſerve him a trick;
For I'll ſlip in the nick,
And with my true love away.

C H O R U S.

O Cupid, befriend a loving pair,
O Cupid, befriend us, we pray!
May our ſtratagems take,
For thine own ſweet ſake;
And, Amen! let all true lovers ſay.

[Arethuſa *withdraws.*

Enter Robin *as a lawyer, and ſoldiers.*

Rob. So, my hearts of oak, are you all ready?

Sold. Yes, an't pleaſe your honour.

Rov. You know your cue, then——to your poſt.

[*They retire to a corner of the ſtage; he knocks ſmartly at the door.*

Rob. What, are you all aſleep, or dead in the houſe, that you can't hear?

[Argus, *holding the door in his hand.*

Arg.

Arg. Sir, you are very hafty, methinks—

Rob. Sir, my buſineſs requires haſte.

Arg. Sir, you had better make haſte about it, for I know no buſineſs you have here.

Rob. Sir, I am come to talk with you on an affair of conſequence.

Arg. Sir, I don't love talking; I know you not, and conſequently can have no affairs with you.

Rob. Sir, not know me!

Arg. Sir, 'tis enough for me to know myſelf.

Rob. A damn'd thwarting old dog this ſame. [*Aſide.*] Sir, I live but juſt in the next ſtreet. [*To him.*]

Arg. Sir! if you liv'd at Jamaica, 'tis the ſame thing to me.

Rob. [*Aſide.*] I find coaxing won't do, I muſt change my note, or I ſhall never unkennel this old fox——[*To him.*] Well, Mr Argus, there's no harm done, ſo take your leave of 3000 l. You have enough of your own already. [*Going.*

Arg. How, 3000 l.! I muſt inquire into this. [*Aſide.*] Sir, a word with you.

Rob. Sir! I have nothing to ſay to you. I took you to be a prudent perſon, that knew the worth of money, and how to improve it; but I find I'm deceiv'd.

Arg. Sir, I hope you'll excuſe my rudeneſs; but, you know, a man cannot be too cautious.

Rob. Sir, that's true, and therefore I excuſe you; but I'd take ſuch treatment from no man in England beſides yourſelf.

Arg. Sir, I beg your pardon; but to the buſineſs.

Rob. Why thus it is: a ſpendthrift young fellow is galloping thro' a plentiful fortune: I have lent 2000 l. upon it already; and if you'll advance an equivalent, we'll fore-cloſe the whole eſtate, and ſhare it between us; for I know he can never redeem it.

Arg. A very judicious man; I'm ſorry I affronted him. [*Aſide.*] But how is this to be done?

Rob. Very eaſily, Sir.—A word in your ear; a little more this way.

[*Draws him aſide; the ſoldiers get between him and the door.*

Arg. But the title, Sir, the title?

Rob.

Rob. Do you doubt my veracity?

Arg. Not in the leaſt, Sir; but one cannot be too ſure.

Rob. That's very true, Sir; and therefore I'll make ſure of you now I have you.

[Robin *trips up his heels; the ſoldiers blindfold and gag him, and ſtand over him, while* Rovewell *carries* Arethuſa *off; after which they leave him, he making a great noiſe.*

Enter Mob.

All. What's the matter, what's the matter?

[*They ungag him*, &c.

Arg. O neighbours, I'm robb'd and murder'd, ruin'd and undone for ever.

1 *Mob.* Why, what's the matter, maſter?

Arg. There's a whole legion of thieves in my houſe; they gagg'd and blindfolded me, and offer'd forty naked ſwords at my breaſt——I beg of you aſſiſt me, or they'll ſtrip the houſe in a minute.

2 *Mob.* Forty drawn ſwords, ſay you, Sir?

Arg. Ay, and more, I think, on my conſcience.

2 *Mob.* Then look you, Sir, I'm a marry'd man, and have a large family, I wou'd not venture amongſt ſuch a parcel of blood-thirſty rogues for the world; but if you pleaſe, I'll run and call a conſtable.

All. Ay, ay, call a conſtable, call a conſtable.

Arg. I ſhan't have a penny left, if we ſtay for a conſtable——I am but one man; and, as old as I am, I'll lead the way, if you'll follow me. [*Going in.*

All. Ay, ay, in, in, follow, follow; huzza!

1 *Mob.* Prithee, Jack, do you go in, if you come to that.

4 *Mob.* I go in! what ſhou'd I go in for? I have loſt nothing.

Wom. What, nobody to help the poor old gentleman? odds bobs! if I was a man, I'd follow him myſelf.

3 *Mob.* Why don't you, then? What occaſionableneſs have I to be kill'd for him or you either?

Enter Robin *as Conſtable.*

All. Here's Mr Conſtable, here's Mr Conſtable.

Rob. Silence, in the King's name.

All.

All. Ay, silence, silence.

Rob. What's the meaning of this riot? Who makes all this disturbance?

1 *Mob.* I'll tell you, Mr Constable.

3 *Mob.* An't please your worship, let me speak.

Rob. Ay, this man talks like a man of parts—What's the matter, friend?

3 *Mob.* An't please your noble worship's honour and glory, we are his Majesty's liege subjects, and were terrify'd out of our habitations and dwelling-places by a cry from abroad; which your noble worship must understand was occasionable by the gentleman of this house, who was so unfortunable as to be killed by thieves, who are now in his house to the numberation of above forty, an't please your worship, all completely arm'd with powder and ball, back-swords, pistols, bayonets, and blunderbusses.

Rob. But what is to be done in this case?

3 *Mob.* Why, an please your worship, knowing your noble honour to be the King's Majesty's noble officer of the peace, we thought 'twas best your honour shou'd come and terrify these rogues away with your noble authority.

Rob. Well said, very well said, indeed!——Gentlemen, I am the King's officer, and I command you in the King's name to aid and assist me to call those rogues out of the house—Who's within there? I charge you come out in the King's name, and submit yourselves to our royal authority,

Argus *from the house.*

2 *Mob.* This is the gentleman that was kill'd, an't please your worship.

Arg. O neighbours, I'm ruin'd and undone for ever! They have taken away all that's dear to me in the world.

1 *Mob.* That's his money; 'tis a sad covetous dog.

Rob. Why, what's the matter? What have they done?

Arg. O, they have taken my child from me, my Thusy!

Rob. Good lack!

3 *Mob.* Marry come up, what valuation can she be?——But have they taken nothing else?

Arg.

Arg. Wou'd they had ſtript my houſe of every penny-worth, ſo they had left my child.

1 *Mob.* That's a lie, I believe; for he loves his money more than his ſoul, and wou'd ſooner part with that than a groat.

Arg. This is the captain's doings; but I'll have him hang'd.

Rob. But where are the thieves?

Arg. Gone, gone, beyond all hopes of purſuit.

2 *Mob.* What, are they gone? Then, come neighbours, let us go in, and kill every mother's child of 'em.

Rob. Hold, I charge you to commit no murder; follow me, and we'll apprehend them.

Arg. Go, villains, cowards, ſcoundrels, or I ſhall ſuſpect you are the thieves that mean to rob me of what is yet left. How brave you are, now all the danger's over? Oh, Sirrah, you dog! [*looking at* Robin;] you are that rogue Robin, the captain's man. Seize him, neighbour's, ſeize him!

Rob. [*aſide.*] I don't care what you do, for the job's over; I ſee my maſter a-coming.

Arg. Why don't you ſeize him, I ſay?

1 *Mob.* Not we, we have loſt too much time about an old fool already.

2 *Mob.* Ay, the next time you're bound and gagg'd, you ſhall lie and be damn'd for me.

3 *Mob.* Ay, and me too; come along, neighbours, come along. [*Exeunt Mob.*

Enter Rovewell, Hearty, Arethuſa, Betty, *and* Robin.

Arg. Bleſs me! who have we got here? O Thuſy! Thuſy! I had rather never have ſeen thee again, than have found you in ſuch company.

Are. Sir, I hope my huſband's company is not criminal?

Arg. Your huſband? who's your huſband, houſewife? that ſcoundrel? captain—Out of my ſight, thou ungracious wretch!——I'll go make my will this inſtant ——and you, you villain, how dare you to look me in the face after all this?——I'll have you hang'd, Sirrah; I will ſo.

Hear. O fie, brother Argus, moderate your paſſion. It ill becomes the friendſhip you owe Ned Northy, to vilify

lify and affront his only child, and for no other crime than improving that friendſhip which has ever been between us.

Arg. Ha! my dear friend alive! I heard thou wert dead in the Indies—And is that thy ſon? and my godſon too, if I am not miſtaken.

Hear. The very ſame—the laſt and beſt remains of our family; forc'd by my wife's cruelty, and my abſence, to the army. My wife is ſince dead, and the ſon ſhe had by her former huſband, whom ſhe intended to heir my eſtate; but fortune guided me by chance to my dear boy, who, after twenty year's abſence, and changing my name, knew me not, till I juſt now diſcovered myſelf to him and your fair daughter, whom I will make him deſerve by thirty thouſand pounds, which I brought from India, beſides what real eſtate I may leave him at my death.

Arg. And to match that, old boy, my daughter ſhall have every penny of mine, beſides her uncle's legacy.—Ah, you young rogue, had I known you, I would not have us'd you ſo roughly——However, ſince you have won my girl ſo bravely, take her, and welcome——But you muſt excuſe all faults——the old man meant all for the beſt; you muſt not be angry.

Rov. Sir, on the contrary, we ought to beg your pardon for the many diſquiets we have given you; and with your pardon, we crave your bleſſing. [*They kneel.*

Arg. You have it, children, with all my heart. Adod, I am ſo tranſported, I don't know whether I walk or fly.

Are. May your joy be everlaſting!

Rovewell *and* Arethuſa, *embracing.*

DUETTO.

Thus fondly careſſing,
My idol, my treaſure,
How great is the bleſſing!
How ſweet is the pleaſure!
With joy I behold thee,
And doat on thy charms;
Thus while I unfold thee,
I've heav'n in my arms.

FLORA:

OR,

HOB IN THE WELL.

IN TWO ACTS.

By COLLEY CIBBER, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Sir Thomas Testy.
Friendly, a gentleman in love with *Flora*,
Hob, a simple country-fellow.
Old Hob, *Hob*'s father.
Dick, servant to *Friendly*.
Roger, servant to *Sir Thomas*.

WOMEN.

Flora, niece to *Sir Thomas*, in love with *Friendly*.
Betty, her maid.
Hob's mother.

SCENE, *in Somersetshire.*

ACT I.

After the Overture, Flora *and* Betty *discovered.*

AIR I.

To the tune of, *At noon, one sultry summer's day.*

FLORA.

HOW wretched are we orphans made,
By dying parents wills betray'd
To guardians pow'rs, who oft invade
Our freedom, to our cost?
Like captives they their wards confine,

Pretending care; but with design
To prostitute 'em for their coin,
To whoe'er bids the most.

Betty——

Bet. Madam.

Flo. 'Tis a sad life I lead here.

'*Bet.* Life, indeed, Madam, is a sad thing any where 'to lovers that are uncoupled.

'*Flo.* Wert thou ever in love, Betty?

'*Bet.* O most cruelly, Madam; but the man I lov'd 'had another more darling mistress——call'd claret——for 'whose sweet society I was forsaken.

'AIR II. *Ye beaux of pleasure.*

'The men of pleasure,
'Who count the seisure
'Of virgin-treasure
'A pleasing task;
'No sooner gain it,
'But they refrain it,
'Nay, oft disdain it,
'For t'other flask.

'*Flo.* And how do you find yourself now?

'*Bet.* As most folks are after the loss of an old lover.

'*Flo.* How's that?

'*Bet.* Ready for a new one.

'*Flo.* Wou'd I were of thy humour.——But' my silly heart's so set upon Mr Friendly, that all mankind beside are no more than my own sex to me.

'*Bet.* Then you must have him, Madam, or you'll go 'into a consumption——

'*Flo.* Ay, but how shall I come at him, Betty?

'*Bet.* Why, run a risk, Madam.

'*Flo.* What risk?'

Bet. Run away with him.

Flo. Psha! How is that possible? 'when my uncle locks 'me up as if I were his only bottle of brandy?

'*Bet.* You know, Madam, I have sometimes the keys 'of both in my keeping——and if you please to uncork 'your conscience, I'll undertake, in eight-and-forty 'hours, Mr Friendly shall have at least half a dozen go-'downs of you.

'*Flo.* Ah, Betty! I'm afraid you flatter me.

'*Bet.*

'*Bet.* Nay, Madam, you are as good a judge of that 'as I; for you muſt own, he has a very promiſing per-'ſon.

'*Flo.* Pſha! I don't think of his perſon.

'*Bet.* If any other woman thought half ſo much of it, 'you wou'd pull her commode for her.

'*Flo.* Pooh!' But 'I mean' I am afraid you are not ſincere in your advice, and that if I ſhou'd truſt you with any deſign of that nature, you wou'd diſcover it to my uncle.

Bet Ah! but if I were to live with you, and have my wages rais'd, after you married—I know whoſe ſuſpicion does me a great deal of wrong.

Flo. Swear then to be true, and I will truſt you. But, dear Betty, be out of the faſhion for once, and keep your oath; I'll tell you why I ſo earneſtly intreat you.

AIR III. *I, who once was great, now little am grown.*

Cuſtom prevailing ſo long 'mongſt the great,
Makes oaths eaſy potions to ſleep on,
Which many (on gaining good places) repeat,
Without e'er deſigning to keep one.
For an oath's ſeldom kept, as a virgin's fair fame;
A lover's fond vows, or a prelate's good name;
A lawyer to truth; a ſtateſman from blame;
Or a patriot-heart in a courtier.

Bet. Here then, I ſwear, by all my hopes and perquiſites; by the ſweet profits of my place in view, and double wages in reverſion; by your lac'd ſhoes too big, and thoſe too little; by the ſilk gown you'll give me at your wedding; by all 'your mantuas, heads, hoops, ſhort hoods 'and cloaks, and as I hope your laſt blue atlas never will 'be worn again!' I ſwear——

Flo. That you will inviolably keep my ſecrets, and aſſiſt me to your utmoſt in running away with Mr Friendly.

Bet. I ſwear.

Flor. Then I will truſt you; and when I'm married, Betty, every article of your oath ſhall be made good to you—Look here then, here's a letter I had juſt written to Mr Friendly, wherein I've promis'd, at twelve o'clock to-night, to be upon the mount in the garden; and if he will take care to meet me on t'other ſide, and ſet a

ladder againſt the wall, I'll toſs over my band-box, venture catching cold in the dew, and take my fortune with him.

Bet. There's metal in the propoſal, Madam—Let's ſee the letter; he ſhall have it in a quarter of an hour, tho' I carry it myſelf.

Flo. But I won't venture neither, unleſs his anſwer tells he'll be ready—So, dear Betty, be careful; I have no mortal to truſt but thee.

Bet. And no mortal fitter to be truſted. [*Exit.*

Flo. So, now my heart's at eaſe—I find my reſolution's good at the bottom; and ſince I have ſet my head upon running away, 'tis not my old uncle nor the garden-wall ſhall ſtop me, tho' he were as wife as a biſhop, and the wall as high as a church-ſteeple.

AIR IV. *Man in imagination.*

Tho' my uncle ſtrives to immure me,
My lover's voice will lure me
To leap from the mount o'er the garden-wall,
And fly this hated place.
Oh, a tedious day to me 'tis;
But when Sol's in the arms of his Thetis,
Swift as the roe (at my hero's call)
I'll elude my hunter's chaſe.

Ah!——

Enter Sir Tho. Teſty.

Sir Tho. How now, Mrs Irreverence! Am I ſuch a hobgoblin, that you ſtart at the ſight of me?

Flo. Sir, I did not think any harm; but when you come upon one unawares——

Sir Tho. Unawares! What! I ſurpris'd you then? Your head was full of other matters, which, I ſuppoſe, that cloſe committee of the fleſh and the devil have abſolutely reſolv'd to be the fundamentals of your conſtitution.

'AIR V. *As I was walking thro' Hyde-Park.*

'When a girl fifteen years does attain,
'Love's follies invading her brain,
'Her virtue's held by a ſlight rein.
'For equipage, hurry, and noiſe,
'Gay cloathing, and ſuch female toys,
'She'll forego more ſubſtantial joys.

'To

'To a feather or powder'd toupee
'Her heart ſoon a captive wou'd be.
'To keep ſuch a one chaſte, we muſt lock her up faſt:
'That maxim beſt pleaſes me.'

Flo. Lord, Sir, how ſtrangely you talk to one!

Sir Tho. Talk! you malapert; why who ſhou'd talk to you but I? Who am I, huſſy? who am I?

Flo. You are my uncle by relation, my guardian by my father's will, and my jailor againſt mine.

Sir Tho. Then while you are my priſoner, huſſy, how dare you take ſuch liberty?

Flo. Becauſe liberty, Sir, is the ſweeteſt thing a priſoner can take.

Sir Tho. Don't you think in your conſcience now, miſtreſs, you deſerve to be lock'd up?

Flo. I think in my conſcience, you ought to let me marry, ſince I've a mind to't.

Sir Tho. Provoking! Dare you own this to my face?

Flo. Why, Sir, is't a fault? You have kept me in priſon for theſe ten mouths, and I did not know but my confeſſing it might deſerve a little of your mercy.

Sir Tho. Aſtoniſhing! The devil has harden'd you, huſſy! you are a ſight! Go, go, to your chamber; people will ſtare at you; I would not have you ſeen abroad in this condition for——O Lord! your brain's turn'd! You ſhall bleed, miſtreſs; I'll have your room darken'd: Water-gruel, diſcipline and water-gruel! ye gods!

Flo. Look'e uncle, I find you have a mind to drive me to a hard bargain; therefore, to let you ſee that I am no hagler, I'll make you an offer which ſhall fairly come up to the moſt you can make of me—as thus—

Sir Tho. What new diſtraction haſt thou got in thy head now?

Flo. Hear me. You know I have 8000l. to my fortune; and that by my father's will you are to be allow'd the whole intereſt of it, 'till I am either married or of age, to reimburſe your expences in maintaining me; which ſaid maintenance, by a modeſt computation, may ſtand you in—Let me ſee—about ſeven or eight pounds a-year (for I've no cloaths but my mother's)—Now, Sir, if you'll immediately give me the liberty of marrying the man I have a mind to, I'll engage he ſhall con-

ſent to the throwing of my fortune into the public funds, the minute you throw me into his arms. So you ſhall have the uſe of my pence till I am of age, as a premium for advancing to him the uſe of my perſon.

Sir Tho. Hum! The girl begins to talk ſenſibly—— But 'tis not yet proper to underſtand her——Look'e, child, when you have perſuaded your lover to make the ſame propoſal under his hand, I ſhall then believe you are equally mad to come at one another——In the mean time, let me adviſe you to your chamber, from whence I will allow you the lovely proſpect of the garden.

[*Exit.*

Flo. You may chance to fret for this, my very wiſe uncle. [*Exit.*

Enter Friendly *and* Servant.

Fri. What a watchful old rogue is this!

Ser. A very dragon, Sir.

Fri. To uſe a young creature ſo unmercifully.

Ser. Nay, Sir, ſo uncivilly.

Fri. How, ſirrah?

Ser. To force her to ſuch extremities, to make her ſtraddle over a great wall, and riſk her neck down a ladder at midnight, when he ought to lend her his hand into a coach and ſix, and out of his great gate at noon-day to come to you, Sir. But the raſcal has no breeding.

Fri. By Mercury, I'll be even with him.

Ser. You have reaſon, Sir; for tho' I ſay it——

Fri. That ſhou'd not ſay it.

Ser. She is a lovely piece of temptation, Sir.

Fri. What's o'clock, ſirrah?

Ser. By the moon's riſing, I believe it may be about, about, a——paſt ten.

Fri. Then, ſirrah, about paſt——twelve——

Ser. You'll have one of her blue ſilk ſtockings ſtraddling over the wall, Sir——

AIR VI. *At paſt one o'clock, and a cold froſty morning.*

Friendly *ſings.*

At paſt twelve o'clock, and a fine ſummer's morning,
When all in the village ſleep pleaſantly,

Cynthia's

Cynthia's bright beams all nature adorning
Shall guide my ſwift ſteps to my lovely ſhe.
Then my fair Flora, fraught with kind wiſhes,
I'll fold in my arms, with amorous kiſſes,
Which ſerve as preludes to more ſolid bliſſes—
Soon as the vicar has made us one.

But where's the country fellow you promis'd ſhould carry my anſwer to her letter?

Ser. Who, Hob, Sir? Here he is; and if any ſuſpects his face for a pimp's, I have no ſkill in the ſcience, Sir.

Enter Hob.

Fri. Well, Hob, can'ſt thou carry this letter to Sir Thomas Teſty's houſe for me?

Hob. Yes, Zir, yes.

Fri. Do ſo, and give it to Madam Flora; but take care nobody ſees you deliver it.

Hob. Yes, Zir—But muſt I carry it to-night?—'Tis main dark.

Fri. You muſt go immediately.

Hob. I hope, Zir, there's no difference between you and Zir Tomas.

Fri. Why doſt hope ſo?

Hob. Why truly, Zir, I do hear there be; and therefore I don't care to meddle or make between friends, for 'tis but an unthankful office; and you know Zir Tomas is very cruſty, and if he does but zuſpect that I ſhau'd conzarn myzel, mayhap he may take the law of me; and you knaw, Zir, that law is a vrightful thing.

AIR VII. *She got money by th' bargain.*

The terrible law, when it faſtens its paw
On a poor man, it gripes 'till he's undone;
And what I am doing, may turn to my ruin,
Tho' rich as the Lord Mayor of London.
Therefore I'll be wary what meſſage I carry,
Unleſs we firſt make a zure bargain;
I will be 'demnify'd, throughly zatisfy'd,
That ch'am ſhan't zuffer a varding.

Fri. Piſh, the law ſhall never trouble thee; I'll ſecure thee from any harm.

Hob. Very well, Zir, very well; that's as much as I can deſire: but pray, don't take unkindly what I ſay; for you

you know no man is willing to bring himzel into a primunire if he con help it.

Fri. No, no—Prithee be gone.

Hob. I will, Zir, I will—-for—-for—-Pray, Zir, be pleas'd to read the zuperſcription for me.

Fri. S'death, how I am tortur'd with this fooliſh fellow, and I can ſend nobody elſe without being ſuſpected—Don't trouble thyſelf with the ſuperſcription, but deliver it as I bid thee.

Hob. Very good, Zir, very good—'Tis main dark—Wou'd it not do as well, Zir, if I ſhould carry it in the morning? I had rather go in the morning.

Fri. Why ſo?

Hob. Why, truly, Zir, I'll tell you: at the lower end of Zir Tomas's orchard, one of our poor neighbours being in a diſparaging condition, has gone and hang'd himzel—Now there is zome do zay that he walks by night in zeveral zorts of ſhapes.

Fri. What, and ſo you are afraid, are you?

Hob. No, indeed, Zir, ch'am not afraid——I thank marcy, I defy the devil and all his works.

Fri. A pox on thee then, get thee gone.

Hob. Tho' I muſt tell you, I have a great concait he will appear to me,—vor, you muſt knaw, to-morrow the crowner's queſt is to zit upon him, whereof, d'ye zee, I'm to be one: and who knows but he may have zomething upon his ſpirits that may make him break his mind to me; and if zo, let me tell you, I'm afraid it will make a bad day for zomebody—-vor, if Sir Tomas had kept his fences whole, mayhap this man had ne'er been tempted to ha' gone into his ground to ha' hang'd himzel. But be that as it will, I'll do your buſineſs vor you; therefore pray take you no care, Zir——

Fri. Prithee about it then.

Hob. Ay, ay, I'll warrant you, don't trouble yourzel no vurder—-vor if I zay I'll do't, I'll do't, that's my humour. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir Thomas *and* Servants.

Sir Tho. 'Twill be a hard matter to ſink any of the principal, indeed; ſo that, cou'd the girl make good the propoſal, I wou'd not care how ſoon ſhe were kiſs'd black in the face; but ſhould I give her the leaſt liberty

'upon't, 'tis poſſible, when ſhe has made uſe on't, her 'conſcience might deſire to be off. And I dare ſwear 'her lover will ſpare neither care nor coſt to come at her 'without my conſent; and gold in particular has a pre-'vailing influence in a love-affair; therefore I muſt watch 'my ward myſelf—Servants may be corrupted.

'AIR VIII. *We'll learn to be merry and wiſe.*

'To guard my Heſperian tree
'Requires more care than of old;
'That was robb'd by a half deity,
'And without the aſſiſtance of gold.
'But, in this age, gold ſoftens the mind,
'A governante's tongue 'twill lay mute,
'Charm prudes, make a coy virgin kind,
'Whilſt a lover (with eaſe) ſteals the fruit.

D'ye hear, raſcals! look ſharp; for this is the uſual hour that your ſoft ſighing rogues run a caterwauling.

Ser. Sir! Sir! yonder's ſomebody with a light coming down the field.

Sir Tho. Stand ſtill then, and obſerve.

Enter Hob, *whiſtling.*

Hob. Zo, this is the houſe—now let me ſee—how ſhall I go about to do this zame buſineſs?——If that old fox, Zir Tomas, ſhou'd 'ſpy me, he'd maul me vor zartain——But let me alone, I'll be cunning enough for him, I'll warrant ye—If he zees me, he muſt have more eyes than two.——Hold, hold, now let me zee vor this ſame letter—O, here it is——for Madam Flo——Flo——Madam Flora.

Sir Tho. Where are you carrying this letter friend?

[Sir Tho. *ſnatching it.*

Hob. Letter, Zir?

Sir Tho. Letter, Sir! ay, letter, Sir! who did you bring it from?

Hob. Bring it vrom, Zir? I brought it from nobody, not I.

Sir Tho. How came you by it?

Hob. By it, Zir? I did not buy it; why, I vound it in my pocket, Zir.

Sir Tho. Found it in your pocket!—What, did it grow there then, ha? Where are you going with it?

Hob.

Hob. Going with it, Zir? I dan't know where ch'am going with it, not I.

Sir Tho. What do you here at this time o'night?

Hob. I can't tell what I do here, not I—I'll go home, Zir, if you pleaſe—I wiſh you a good night.

Sir Tho. Hold, hold, a little, friend; let me reward you firſt for bringing it, however,

Hob. Not a varthing, Zir; indeed, I muſt not take one varthing, for Maiſter Friendly charg'n me to th' contrary; therefore, pray, dan't offer it.

Sir Tho. O, did he ſo?——But ſomething I will give you, however: Pray take that, and that, ſirrah.

[*Beats him.*

Hob. O Lard! O Lard! what do ye ſtrik'n vor? avore Gad, I'll take the law of you, zee an I don't—what, do you go to murder me?

Sir Tho. I'll law you, you rogue—are you their letter-carrier? there's more for you, ſirrah.

Hob. Bear witneſs, bear witneſs, zee an you dan't pay for this. O Lard! O Lard!

Sir Tho. Here, ſirrahs, lay hold of him, till I examine the letter. Let's ſee—"To Mrs Flora"—right.

"The propoſal you mention, in caſe of extremity, will "certainly do; but it will be a much pleaſanter piece of "juſtice to bite him for his barbarity. [*A ſon of a whore, "he means me to be ſure.*] The ladder, and all things "ſhall be ready exactly at twelve to-night [*Oons!*] If "you have any thing farther of moment, this fellow is "honeſt, and will convey it ſafe to your eternal lover,

"TOM. FRIENDLY."

Yes, yes, I find he is honeſt, with a pox to him, and I'll reward him accordingly—Here, deſire that honeſt gentleman to walk down to the bottom of that well—And let him ſtay there 'till I call for him.

Hob. I con't do it, as I hope to be zav'd I con't; pray vorbear, and don't murder an innocent man.

[*Falls on his knees.*

AIR IX. *My father he left me a wealthy eſtate.*

Sings. I never 'till now was conzarn'd in ſtrife;
Have mercy, Sir Thomas, and ſpare poor Hob's life,

And

And give me my vreedom, as I had bevore—
I'll be a good boy, and I'll do zo no more.

Indeed I won't——

Sir Tho. In with him, I say——

Hob. O Lard! Maister Jonathan, I vorewarn you, dan't be conzarn'd in this: Conzider what you do.

Sir Tho. Oons! in with him.

Hob. You are all principals, there are no 'compliſhes in murder. Help! Murder!

[*They put him down, and exeunt.*

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Enter Flora.

Flo. I heard a ſtrange noiſe without; I wiſh things go as they ſhou'd—'My heart beats, as if Mr What-d'ye-'call 'em were in my arms.'—Well, this love's a terrible thing—Wou'd the worſt on't were over, I'm afraid I ſhall never be able to go thro' with it.—I am ſure here's an odd buſtle about it.

Enter Betty.

How now!

Bet. Undone! undone! Madam! Your uncle has intercepted Mr Friendly's letter in anſwer to your's, and all your deſigns are diſcovered; he raves and tears like a madman, and in his paſſion he has thrown the poor fellow that brought it into the great well, and ſwears if any body offers to help him out, without his order, he'll throw them in after him.

Flo. Well, if I am here alive, I thought it wou'd come to nothing—It vexes the heart of me.

Bet. But come, Madam, don't be wholly diſcouraged; for John tells me, 'tis a hundred to one but the fellow's drown'd.

Flo Pſha! I wiſh my uncle was drown'd in his room.

Bet. No, Madam; but he'll be hang'd, and that's as well.

Flo. Do you really think ſo?

Bet. Poz.

Flo. Then I'll marry in ſpite of his teeth.

Bet. Right; when he's in one nooſe, you may ſlip into t'other.

Flo. Dear Betty, ſtep out and ſee how 'tis with the fellow,

fellow, for I'm in a thousand frights; and if things are —you know how,—ask when the assizes begin.

[*Exit* Betty.

AIR X. *The lass with the nut-brown hair.*

'To forgive, sure, is great,
'But revenge for wrong's sweet,
'So for once let resentment prevail.
'My guardian relation
'Is in a situation
'Should move a soft breast to bewail:
'But his sordid cruelty
'Has so perverted me,
'I can hear of his death without pain.
'When he's swinging in his shoes,
'I'll fix my marriage-noose,
'And (with justice) great Hymen shall reign.

[*Exit.*'

SCENE, *The Well*, &c.

Enter Old Hob *and his* Wife.

O. Hob. Come, wife, never trouble thyzelf, a wull go a rawging zometimes, and there's an end on't, a wull come home again I warrant 'un.

Wife. I think o' my conscience 'tis no great matter whether he does or no.—A base raugue, to be out of the way at such a busy time as thick is. The zun has been up this hour and quarter, and that grauceless boy, I warrant, has not been a-bed yet. Prithee, husband, step and zee a'n he be'nt zooting at the park-gate, and I'll draw the water in the mean time.

O. Hob. Do you then. [*Exit.*

Wife. This boy's the plague of my life, I think—— 'twere more than time the gammon had been boiled by now. And now the volk will come to the wake bevore he be cold—and then it waun't be vit to be eaten——A jackanapes! when I bid 'en, and beg 'en, and prayed 'en to stay, and he wou'd go—And yet notwithstanding all I have zaid, cou'd I lay eyes on him, I shau'd vorget his roguery, and vorgiv'n.

AIR XI. *The Logan water is so deep.*

Sings. The shepherdess with looks dismayed,
Because her fav'rite lamb has stray'd;

In

In angry ſearch her time employs!
But found—that paſſion's loſt in joys.
So will it be with ſilly me,
When next my truant-boy I ſee;
My heart pleads ſtrongly on his ſide,
And I ſhall rather kiſs than chide.

Here have I been blaming the poor boy for not minding his buſineſs, and at the ſame time neglect my own; I muſt haſte to wind up the bucket, or I ſhall have huſband back bevore I've drawn a drop of water.

[*Goes to the well, and ſings;* Did you not hear, &c. Lud, lud, 'tis main heavy—Heyday—I believe old Nick's in the bottom o' the bucket, for my part. [Hob *cries out.*] Oh, a ghoſt! a ghoſt!

[Hob *appears in the bucket; ſhe lets the rope go, and he ſinks again.*

Enter Old Hob.

O. Hob. Heyday! what's the matter, with a murrain t'ye? is the woman in her tantrums?

Wife. A ghoſt! a ghoſt!—Hob's ghoſt in the well—ah!——

O. Hob. The woman's turn'd vool, I think—let me zee; if the devil be in the well, I'll vetch 'en out on't—here's a rout indeed—Wauns! I think the devil be in the bucket——But now I have got 'en half way, I'll knaw what zort of a devil 'tis; and if he ben't a zivil one, I'll zouze 'en and zop 'en in the bottom agen.

Y. Hob. Ah! hau'd vaſt, vather, 'tis I! 'tis I!

Wife. Ah! 'tis there agen.

O. Hob. Haud your peace, I zay; the devil can't get in a word for you, I think—Who's there? Hob?

Y. Hob. Ay, vor lov's zake pull away, vather.

O. Hob. Prithee lend's thy hond, wife—Bleſs my eyes! 'tis Hob indeed—What in the name of wonder doſt thou here, lad?

Y. Hob. Ah! dan't aſk queſtions now, vather——get me home—Zir Tomas has don't; but if there be law in all the king's kingdom, I'll capias 'en vor zartain; I dan't knaw but it may prove the death of me; I'll zue him next hizi-prizis, an't coſt me vorty ſhillings. I'll zue him, come on't what will—zee if I don't make him pay vor't.

AIR XII. *To an Iriſh tune.* Tric.

Wife. Oh! my poor boy,
O. Hob. His looks are ſtark wild.
Wife. Cou'd Sir Tomas deſtroy
O. Hob. So hopeful a child?
Y. Hob. I'll revenge if I con.
Wife. Ah! talk ſo no more.
O. Hob. He's a great mon,
O. Hob. and *Wife.* And we are but poor.
Y. Hob. All you do zay can zignify nothing,
I'll capias 'en vor't, let coſt what it will.
Wife. Go to bed, boy, whilſt I get thee dry clothing.
O. Hob. Think thou art taught to return good for ill?
Y. Hob. I'll indict 'en i' th' crown,
And bind o'er to the ſeſſions,
Tho'f I zell my heifer and the auld mare,
Udſblead I'd hang 'en or drown 'en.
O. Hob. Forbear zuch expreſſions.
Wife. Prithee vorgive, and be not zevere.
Y. Hob. I'll never vorgive, and will be zevere.
Wife. Oh, poor Hob! come along, child, and I'll get thee a little zugar-zops to comfort thy bowels.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Enter Sir Thomas *and* Servant.

SIR THOMAS.

JOHN, what's become of the fellow that fell into the well laſt night? has any body taken any care of him?

Ser. No, Sir; your worſhip ſaid he ſhould lie there till your worſhip was pleaſed to call for him——

Sir Tho. Oons, ſirrah, you have not drown'd the fellow, have you?

Ser. Who, I drown him, Sir! nay, nay, hau'd yee, I am but a ſervant, and 'twas you bad me; an any miſchief ſhou'd come on't, 'tis you muſt anſwer it—Fleſh! what have I to do with it?

Sir Tho. You impudent rogue, wou'd you put your villanies upon me? Did not I ſee you collar him, did not you

you lay violent hands upon him, ſirrah, and am not I a witneſs againſt you?

Ser. Lard! Lard! at this rate a man had as good be a galley-ſlave as a ſervant—If one don't do as one's bid, one's head's broke; and if one does, one's to be hang'd for't—But come what will, the gallows will hold two, that's the beſt on't.

Sir Tho. He ſays true, faith—Well, well, keep your own counſel, ſirrah, and I'll ſee what I can do to ſave you.

Ser. Nay, nay, as for that, do you ſee, do as you ſee cauſe—let it go thick way, or let it go thack way, 'tis all a caſe to me go which way it will; one good turn will require another.

Sir Tho. Hold your peace, ſirrah—and begone—— [*Exit* Servant.] This ſurly dog is not to be frighted, I ſee; I muſt (as is cuſtomary with a man in power) protect this fellow in his roguery for my own ſake.

'AIR XIII. *I have left the world as the world 'found me.*

'Sir Thomas ſings.

'A rogue that is hired
'To do what's required,
'And ne'er ſtick at honour or conſcience
'To compaſs his ends,
'Will deſtroy his beſt friends,
'For a villain's ſure friendſhip is nonſenſe.
'Yet ſtill he may laugh,
'Well aſſur'd he is ſafe,
'And deſpiſe all attempts to accuſe him;
'For his patron oft-times
'Promoting his crimes,
'Muſt (for ſelf preſervation) excuſe him.'

Enter Servant *with a letter.*

Ser. Sir, here's a letter for you.

Sir Tho. Who brought it?

Ser. Mr Friendly's man, Sir.

Sir Tho. Let's ſee. [*Reads.*

"Sir, Your niece informs me, that ſhe has made you "a propoſal concerning our marriage, which I am

" willing to ratify whenever you pleaſe to do me
" the honour of a meeting. Your's.

Humph! that meeting may be to meet with my niece, for ought I know—I muſt have the particulars under his hand before I ſeem to underſtand him: Therefore, that I don't underſtand him, ſhall be my anſwer.—In the mean time I'll put on a ſmoother look to the girl, and ſhow her a little of the country-diverſion from the mount in the garden; and if they are in earneſt, that good-humour will work her to work him up to my price. —Bid the fellow ſtay 'till I write him an anſwer.

[*Exit.*

SCENE, *The Wood and Garden-wall.*

Enter Old Hob *and* Wife.

Wife. Come, huſband, now the boy has got on his dry cloaths, let him be ſtirring a bit—Come, come, make haſte, the town will be vull of volk bevore we ſhall get vitted.

O. Hob. Don't trouble thyzelf, wife; every thing within doors is ready, and there's nothing wanting but the zign to be put up; and look'ye, that ſhall be done preſent—Hob! Hob!

Y. Hob. [*within.*] What zay you, father?

O. Hob. Tap the ale, quick, quick.

Y. Hob. Ay, ay, vather.

O. Hob. There—now he that will drink good ale, let him come to the ſign of the pot-lid—Come, wife, let's to our buſineſs within. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Friendly, *diſguiſed;* Servant, *and* Country-people.

Fri. If this diſguiſe does not conceal me—

Ser. You'll then be out of countenance to no purpoſe, Sir—But, pray, Sir, what do you propoſe by turning ballad-ſinger?

Fri. I do propoſe that Flora ſhall know me by my voice, and that conſequently her wits will ſoon be at work to come at me.

Ser. Well, Sir, but of what uſe can I be? for I can no more ſing than I can faſt.

Fri. But you can help to draw other gaping fools about me.

Ser. There's ſome ſenſe in that, indeed, Sir.

Enter

Enter Sir Thomas, Flora, *and* Betty.

Sir Tho. Come, niece, if you muſt ſee the paſtimes, you may have as fair a proſpect of it here as in the crowd.

Flo. I like it very well here, Sir.

Fri. Well, ho! this ſame is intitled, An excellent new Ballad in praiſe of the Country-Wake.

Sir Tho. Hark! we ſhall have a merry ballad.

Flo. Bleſs my eyes!—is not that he, Betty?

Bet. The very he, Madam—but huſh.

AIR XIV. A Ballad. *Rare doings at Bath.*

Friendly *ſings.*

I'll ſing you a ditty, and warrant it true,
Give but attention unto me a while,
Of tranſactions at court, and in country too,
Toilſome pleaſures, and pleaſing toil.
Accept it (I pray) as your help-mates you take;
To ſome 'twill give joy,
And ſome others annoy:
All's fair at a country-wake. All's fair, &c.

" At courts we ſee patriots noble and juſt,
" Fit for employments of honour and pow'r;
" But then there are ſycophants, unfit for truſt,
" Blend with the great, and in number are more;
" Slaves, who would honour and honeſty ſtake,
" With ſordid intention,
" To get place or penſion:
" Strange news at a country-wake. Strange news, &c.

Some ladies at court are ſtyled unpolite,
Becauſe truly virtuous, and prone to no ill;
Whilſt others who ſparkle in diamonds bright,
Are ſtript of their pride at *haſſet* or *quadrille*,
'Till their loſſes at play do their lord's credit ſhake;
Then, their toys to recover,
They'll grant the laſt favour:
Strange news at a country-wake. Strange news, &c.

Here moſt of our gentlemen patriots are,
Tho' very bad ſtateſmen, I freely confeſs;
They deſign harm to none—but a fox or a hare,
And are always found loyal in war and in peace.

The farmer's industry does earth fertile make;
The husbandman's ploughing,
His planting and sowing,
Gets health and good cheer at a country-wake. Gets, &c.
Our girls blooming fair, without washes or paints,
From neighbouring villages hither resort,
They kiss sweet as roses, yet virtuous as saints,
(Who can say more for the ladies at court?)
No worldly cares vex 'em, asleep or awake;
But their time they improve
In peace and true love,
And innocent mirth, at the country-wake. And, &c.
The schemes of a courtier are full of intrigue;
Here's all fair and open, dark deeds we despise:
Set rural contentment 'gainst courtly fatigue,
Who chooses the former is happy and wise.
Now let's pray for the king, and, for England's sake,
From all faction free,
May his subjects agree
As well at the court as the country-wake. As well, &c.

Do you think she knew me?

Ser. Knew you, Sir! why, I bought one of your ballads for her, and she tipt the wink upon me, with as much as to say, Desire him not to go till he hears from me.—Suppose, Sir, you took a cup of nappy here, to pass away the time a little.

Fri. Call for what you have a mind to.

Ser. Here, house!—— [*Enter* Hob.

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming. Your zarvant, Maister Friendly, I'm glad to zee you, you're welcome to the vair.

Fri. I thank you, honest Hob.

Hob. I shau'd knaw that gentlemon—Maister Richard, I think?

Ser. Ay, Hob; how do'st do?

Hob. O Laird, Maister, haw d'ye do? Come, pray, zit down.—Maister Friendly—Come, pray stay, and drink one pot avore you go.

Fri. Sit down, or this fellow's impertinence will make us observ'd. What do'st thou do with an apron on, Hob?

Hob. Adod, I pu'nt on but just now; vather will do as neighbours do, and every one i' th' town almost zells ale

ale on vair-day—but now we zell ſeveral other zorts of liquors, and wine too, an occaſion be.

Fri. Wine!

Hob. Ay, all zorts of wine.

Fri. Say'ſt thou ſo? Bring us ſome claret then.

Hob. Claret, Zir! We have no claret; we mun not zell claret, 'tis againſt th' law.—Now you may ha' ſome o' your port, your red port now, or your white port, or ſuch zort of ſtuff.

Fri. Such ſtuff as thou haſt then, prithee bring us.

Hob. Yes, Zir—Ch'am coming—Now in my mind, Zir, what do you think of a little zack; a little zack now, and zome o' your zugar in't, is main good.

Fri. Prithee, bring what thou lik'ſt beſt thyſelf; for I'm ſure 'twill pleaſe no palate but thy own.

[*Exit* Hob.

Ser. Sir, with humble ſubmiſſion, I don't yet diſcover any great hopes from this ſame project of your's. Pray, Sir, how do you propoſe to come at the lady?

Fri. While the garden door's ſhut, and that old dragon is ſo watchful of the fruit, there are but little hopes indeed. However, I won't quit the place; fortune may yet do ſomething unexpectedly to befriend me.

Enter Hob, *with pots, tobacco, bread, cheeſe, and ſugar.*

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming.—Here, Zir.—

Fri. Where's the ſack, Hob?

Hob. Zack, Zir! Odd I dan't knaw, I thought you zaid you had rather have ale.—Ale is indeed much wholeſomer for your Engliſh ſtomachs.—For my part, I'd rather have ale now. Maiſter Richard, bite a bit avore you drink; come, and in the mean time I'll put a little zugar in the ale, and make it as good as I con for you. Come, Zir, againſt you're diſpos'd.

Fri. Thank you, Hob——This fellow's kindneſs will poiſon me. [*Aſide.*

Ser. Not at this rate of taſting, Sir; for he has not left a drop at the bottom.

Hob. Adod, 'tis main good, Zir.—Will you have t'other pot, Zir?

Fri. No; prithee drink this too, and then fetch us a couple.

Hob. Yes, Zir, I will.—Ch'am coming. [*Exit* Hob.

Sir

Sir Tho. Come, my merry countrymen, every man take his lafs, and give us a dance or two, and then we'll have the cudgels out.

Count. Yes, a'nt like your worſhip, we are all ready. Come, Scratch, ſtrike up. [*Dance.*

Enter Hob.

Hob. Ay, marry Zir; well done, Ralph! zet to un, Joan! zet to un——

Wife. [*within.*] Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming—Tol, lol—In, Mary——Sides all now——Sides all——

Fri. Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming, Maiſter. Tol, lol.

O. Hob. [*within.*] Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming—What a plague ails vather, trow? An old vool! Udſblead, he makes more a noiſe—Set to now, William——Ah, rarely done! In, Mary; ah, dainty Mary! Turn her about, John—now, now! a murrain!—You're quite out.—Look, Ralph ſhould ha' caſt off; and while John had turn'd Mary about, Tomas ſhou'd ha' led up Nan, and Joan met Ralph at bottom agen; mean-while, John ſhou'd have ſided with Mary, and then Mary ſhou'd back to back with Ralph, and then Tomas had come in again in his own place; and ſo all had been right——Come, begin again.—Strike up, Scratch. Tol, lol.

O. Hob. [*within.*] Hob! Hob! Where be ye?

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming: What a devil, can't you be quiet a bit?—Tol, lol.

Enter Old Hob.

O. Hob. Heyday! heyday! This is rare ſport. Udſblead, I'll ſtrap you, you baſe rawg ye——Muſt you be dauncing here, and your mother and I at work?

[*Strikes him.*

Hob. Heyday, what's the matter now? What, muſt I be beat all days o' my life?

O. Hob. You graceleſs rawg, mind your buſineſs then, do; yonder's your poor mother within, a ſcawring and ſcawring 'till ſhe ſweats again, and nobody to draw one drop of beer.

Hob. I don't care a varthing——I won't draw a drop

move, if you go to that; do your worſt, and take your courſe.

O. Hob. Sirrah, come in, and dan't ſtand dauncing here, dan't ye.

Hob. I won't go in, zo I won't; if that trouble ye, I will daunce, and daunce agen. Tol, lol, lol——

AIR XV.

O. Hob. Sure never was ſeen ſuch a rebel,
Thou worſt of undutiful boys;
Thy tongue, like the builders of Babel,
Confuſes the ear with its noiſe.
Remember thy dreary figure,
When out of the well thou waſt brought;
Thy mother and I toil'd with vigour
To ſave thee—And now thou'rt worth nought.

Ah! thou'rt an untoward boy as e'er was born. Marcy forgive me for begetting thee. [*Exit* O. Hob.

Hob. Marry come up, what's here to do, I trow?

Country-p. Here's the cudgels, an't like you; will your worſhip pleaſe to have us begin?

Sir Tho. Ay, ay, by all means; make haſte, Roger, and bring forth the hat and favour.

Rog. Here 'tis, an't pleaſe you.

Sir Tho. Hang it up there; and he that wins it, let him wear it—The firſt Somerſetſhire man that breaks a head, here's half-a-crown for him to drink; and he that breaks that rogue Hob's head, ſhall have another.

Hob. Shall he?

AIR XVI. *Go vind the vicar of Taunton Dean.*

Go vind the vicar of our town,
And he'll hauld ye an angel o' my head;
And I'll bet you another, and ſtake it down,
That I break both his and thy head——
Few bouts will ſet theſe matters right;
For my cudgel, an't prove a good one,
Shau'd make no diſtinction 'twixt yeoman and knight,
Sing heydon, dooden, cudden, &c.

Look ye, he that breaks my head ſhall ha' zomewhat to do, I'll tell you that.—Let'n be who he wull, he ſhall earn his money; ecod I'll rib'n; and look ye, to begin, here I'll take up the cudgel——and now let the beſt man here take up t'other a'n he dare——If he be a Zo-

mer-

merzetſhire man, let'n be a Zomerzetſhire man.——I fight for Glouceſterſhire, I don't care who knaws it.

Sir Tho. At him, at him there! What! is there nobody dare venture upon him? Neighbour Puzzlepate, take up t'other cudgel.

Puz. Not I, an't pleaſe you; I have enough of 'en already, he broke my head but laſt week.

Sir Tho. Roger—Sirrah, do you take up t'other cudgel, and thraſh him, d'ye hear, thraſh him ſoundly, ſirrah.

Rog. I can't promiſe that, Sir; I'll do my beſt: I'll break his head if I can, in love; and if he breaks mine, much good may do him.

Fri. So, if Hob does but get the better of the combat, the teſty knight will certainly be provok'd to come down, and then we ſhall have ſport—Dick, help to encourage him.

Ser. Well ſaid, Hob! O brave Hob! now for Glouceſterſhire, Hob!

Hob. I warrant ye, Maiſter; let me alone.

Fri. Here, Hob, there's an angel for thee; and if thou break'ſt his head, I'll give thee another.

Hob. Don't ye vear, Maiſter; ecod I'll 'noint 'en.

Rog. Do, if thou can'ſt——I don't fear thee, Hob.

Hob. 'Sblead, I'll dreſs thy jacket, I'll dowſe thy Zomerzetſhire coat for thee.

Rog. Will you?

AIR XVII. *In Taunton Dean.*

In Taunton-Dean I was born and bred,
And 'tis knawn I don't value a broken head;
Nor ſhou'd I fear Hob, were he ſtout in his wrath,
As Hercules or Goulding of Bath.
Fal, lal, &c.

Come on.

Ser. O brave Hob!

All. O brave Roger!——Huzza!

[Hob *breaks his head, takes down the hat and favour, puts it on, and ſtruts about.*

Hob. Ecod I have don't, I have don't, efaith.

AIR XVIII. *Now comes on the glorious year.*

Now, brave boys, the fight is done,

And

And I the prize have fairly won;
For I knew I cou'd beat'n four to one,
And that he'll fore remember.
Fal, lal, &c.

Sir Tho. Foul, foul, foul.

Hob. Fair, fair, fair.

Sir Tho. You lie, you dog, 'twas foul.

All. Huzza.

Fri. Stand upon your guard, Hob, the knight's coming down.

Hob. Is he? Let'n come, and welcome; here I'll ſtand: I'll take no other than St George's guard. If he let's drive at me, vore gad, I'll hit'n o'er the ſconce, an he were a knight of gold.

Sir Tho. Where are theſe bumkins? Now, who ſays 'tis fair? I ſay 'tis foul.

Hob. I ſay 'tis fair.

[Sir Thomas *endeavouring to come at* Hob, *is held by the country-people.*

AIR XIX. *Come, ſound up your trumpets.*

Pray let'n come, neighbours, for I ben't afeard:
Doſt think I'll be ſcar'd, like a child at a rod?
I'll keep my ground bravely, and St George's guard.
Take care then, Zir Tomas, I'll 'noint ye, ecod.
With a fal, lal, &c.

[*They let him go,* Hob *breaks his head; he draws his ſword.* Hob *and* Countrymen *run away;* Sir Thomas *purſues.*

Fri. to *Flo.* Now, now, dear creature, if ever you would redeem yourſelf or me from eternal bondage, be kind, and fly into the arms of liberty.

Flo. What wou'd you have me do?

AIR XX. *Come, open the door, ſweet Betty.*

O fly from this place, dear Flora,
Thy jailor has left thee free;
And before the next bluſh of Aurora,
You'll find a guardian in me.

Flo. Fain would I exchange for the better;
Confinement can have no charms.

Fri. Think which of your priſons is ſweeter:
This, or a young lover's arms.

Madam;

Madam, your uncle has left the the garden-door open; there's no mortal now to oppoſe your flight——Scout, ——Scout, you dog, and ſee that the enemy don't rally upon us.

Ser. Ay, ay, Sir. [*Exit* Servant.

Flo. Ah, but conſider, if my uncle ſhould ſurpriſe me!

Bet. Conſider, the door's open, Madam.

Fri. Nothing but delay can ruin us.

Flo. O dear, I'm in a thouſand frights!

Bet. This is downright provoking! Sir, ſince you ſee there's no hopes of my lady, if you can ſettle the leaſt tip of your heart upon her humble ſervant, I'll be over the wall in a twinkling.

Flo. Hold, hold; rather than you ſhould break your neck, I will venture—Well, here I am, I tremble every joint of me; now whither will you carry me?

[*They come down.*

Fri. To a doctor that ſhall cure thee of all fears for ever—To the parſon, the parſon, my dear angel.

[*Exeunt.*

'*Flo.* O Lurd! but if he ſhould not be at home now!

'*Bet.* What ſhould we do for ſomething to be afraid 'of?

'AIR XXI. *Ranting, roaring Billy.*

'Thus maidens bely their deſires,
'Yet languiſh for what they refuſe;
'And tho' their breaſts glow with love's fires,
'Seem cold to the joys they would chooſe.
'The tongue and the heart are two factions
'We ſcarce reconcile till made brides;
'Like ſtateſmen, our ſpeeches and actions
'Have commonly contrary ſides. [*Exeunt.*'

Enter Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. There, you ruſtic rogues, you hard-headed dogs, I think I've at laſt met with your ſkulls——I believe I have notch'd ſome of your noddles for you.——Heyday! the garden-door open, and my niece gone!—My mind miſgives me conſumedly——Niece! Betty! Thieves! Robbery! Murder! Loſt! Not to be found!

Enter

Enter Friendly's Servant.

Ser. So, here he is, and I muſt bam him till the buſineſs is over.

Sir Tho. Thieves! Thieves!

Ser. Pray, Sir, what's the matter?

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, let me go, or I'll run my ſword into your guts.

Ser. Sir, I'm afraid your brain's ſomething out of order; and therefore 'twill be a friendly part in me to take care of you.

Sir Tho. Blood and thunder! you dog, get out of my way, or I'll—

Ser. Nay, then— [*Preſenting a piſtol.*

'AIR XXII. *Stand, who comes there?*

'Stand; have a care.
'Stand; have a care.
'One ſtep to move,
'Will fatal prove;
'For I know who you are.'

Come, Sir, make your thruſt——

Sir Tho. What the devil are you, Sir?

Ser. A philoſopher; and this ſmall pop is my argument.

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, I believe you're a highwayman, and your pop there is your livelihood.

Ser. Sir, you may be as ſcurrilous as you pleaſe, provided you don't paſs this way.

Sir Tho. 'Sdeath, Sir, what buſineſs have you to hinder me?

Ser. Sir, I have no buſineſs at preſent but to hinder you.

Sir Tho. But pray, Sir, how comes it to be your buſineſs?

Ser. Becauſe, Sir, 'tis my buſineſs to do my maſter's buſineſs; and I have ſome modeſt reaſon to believe, that he and the parſon are now doing your niece's buſineſs.

Sir Tho. The devil! Murder! Where are they, villain?

Ser. Pray, Sir, compoſe yourſelf, for they are here.

Enter Friendly, Flora, *and* Betty.

Fri. Your bleſſing, Sir?

Ser. Does not that ſhow a ſweet temper in him now, to aſk it of you, that are but his bare uncle?

Sir Tho. I am ſtruck all of a heap, and dumb.

Ser. Come, Sir, don't be as obſtinate as an old covetous father at the end of a comedy; conſider, the main action's over, you had as good be reconcil'd.

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, I can't be reconcil'd.

[*Exit* Sir Tho.

Ser. Go thy ways, like a croſs-grain'd old fool.

Fri. Let him perſiſt in his obſtinacy, it can be no bar to our happineſs. You look melancholy, my love.

Flo. 'I think I've reaſon—You promis'd to carry me 'to a doctor that ſhould cure me of my fears. But, on 'the contrary, I find that the malady increaſes; and in 'nothing more than the dread of your inconſtancy.' I have for ever loſt my uncle's favour, and have now no friend but you——Shou'd you hereafter eſtrange your heart from me, I am wretched indeed—'Reflect on what 'I've ſaid, excuſe my ſuſpicions, and remember there is 'no return of ſeaſons in love.

'AIR XXIII. *'Twas on a ſunſhine ſummer's day.*'

'*Flo.* Sweet is the budding ſpring of love—
'Next, blooming hopes all fears remove;
'And when poſſeſs'd of beauty's charms,
'Fruition, like the ſummer, warms.
'But pleaſures, oft repeated, cloy;
'To autumn wanes the fleeting joy;
'Declining till deſires are loſt——
'Succeeded by eternal froſt. Succeeded, &c.'

Fri. Baniſh thoſe fears, and be aſſured they are groundleſs——Dick——

Ser. Sir.

Fri. Run, and call our country-neighbours back again to their diverſions, in which they were interrupted by Sir Thomas; tell them they ſhall be merry with me today, to make them amends for being frighted. [*Exit* Dick.] 'Twas a happy interruption, for it gave us an opportunity to be for ever fix'd in love.——Look merry, my dear.

Flo. My concern vaniſhes, now I've diſcloſed my fears, and cheerfulneſs will ſoon reſume its throne.

Fri.

Fri. You ſhall never have cauſe to mention thoſe fears again—

Flo. It is eaſy to talk thus now; but the difficulty will be to ſpeak theſe ſentiments, with truth, a year hence. However, as I have run all hazards for you, honour will oblige you to conceal your inconſtancy from me—ſhou'd you be guilty of it.

AIR XXIV. *Red Houſe.* Duetto.

Flo. Let me not diſcover
In thee a faithleſs lover.
Fri. I'll never prove a rover;
But true as a turtle to thee, my dear.
Flo. Love prompts me to believe thee;
Do not then deceive me.
Fri. My conduct ne'er ſhall grieve thee,
Let this ſuffice; my heart's ſincere.
Flo.——Let our lives be ſpent—
Fri.——In merriment;
Flo.——With the ſweet cement—
Fri.——Of ſoft content.
Flo.——May our joys augment—
Fri.——May no dire event
Both.————Diſturb our mutual pleaſure.

Enter Dick, Hob, *and* Countryfolks.

Hob. Is Zir Tomas gone?

Fri. Ay, Hob; come in; what art afraid of?

Hob. 'Sblead, I was woundily afraid of's zword; had he kept to ſtick, I'd thraſh 'en to mummy.

Fri. I'm ſorry, neighbours, Sir Thomas's paſſionate folly diſturb'd your ſports one way; I'll endeavour to make you all ſatisfaction; this is my wedding-day, and conſequently a day of jubilee.

Coun. We wiſh you joy, Maiſter Friendly and Miſtreſs————

Hob. I wiſh ye joy too. But when I was zopp'd i' th' well, I little thought I ſhould live to tell you zo.

Fri. Hob, thou ſhalt laugh at thy danger—now 'tis over.————Come, we'll 'have a ſong and dance, and' haſte to my dwelling, and finiſh the day with mirth and hearty cheer: The night I'll dedicate to love and thee.

[*To* Flora.

AIR XXV. *Friendly.*

Succeſs this day has gain'd me poſſeſſion
Of what I love much dearer than life:
The coming night ſhall give me fruition
Of all I can wiſh in a lovely wife.
To enjoy the ſweets the country affords,
Who would not forego the ſervile flatt'ry of courts;
To hunt, fiſh, and fowl,
And taſte the full bowl,
There is nothing ſo healthful as rural ſports.

CHORUS.

Now from envy free, —All friends loyally
Supplicate with me, Our guardian divinity,
To bleſs the king and queen, and royal progeny.
Send us peace, trade's increaſe, health and proſperity.
May Cupid's darts ſtrike ſure—But be the cauſe the cure;
In virtuous deeds delight——Happy all unite
In friendſhip and love.
[*A dance, and exeunt.*

THE

THE SPIRIT OF CONTRADICTION.

IN TWO ACTS.

By a GENTLEMAN of CAMBRIDGE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

	Covent-Garden.
Mr Partlet, a country-gentleman, father to *Harriet*,	Mr Ridout.
Lovewell, an officer in the army, in love with *Harriet*,	Mr Clarke.
Steer, a gentleman grazier, in love with *Harriet*.	Mr Gibbs.
Randal, *Partlet*'s gardener,	Mr Shuter.
Ruin, a lawyer,	Mr Perry.

WOMEN.

Mrs Partlet, wife to *Partlet*,	Mrs Ward.
Miss Harriet,	Miss Mowat.
Betty, their servant,	Mrs Green.

SCENE, Partlet's *Garden*, *at his country-house*.

ACT I.

SCENE, Partlet's *Garden*.

Enter Randal, *vex'd*, *a Spade in his hand*.

RANDAL.

A PLAGUE, and a double plague, upon all perverse mistresses, say I! May the black blight take her! —By the lord Harry, a poor man had better live in hell than in service; there he is quit for one zort of vexation, here ch'ave a thousand.

Enter Partlet.

Part. Hey, hey! What, talking to thyself, Randal? Why, what art thou possess'd, man?

Rand. Truly ch'am, Meiſter; and with one of the moſt miſchievous zort of ſpirits too.

Part. Which is that, pr'ythee?

Rand. Nay, a vemale one. By the welkin, a thouſand moles do not make ſo much waſte in a garden as one woman.

Part. Why, who is it that has been plaguing thee?

Rand. Who? ſhe who plagues every body, and herſelf too. Can any body bear to have a tulip taken vor an onion!

Part. So my wife has been with you, I find. Good Randal, you muſt have patience with her.

Rand. Patience! Why, ſhe order'd me yeſterday to graft a peach upon a cabbage-ſtalk, and ſaid 'twas the Italian method. Shortly ſhe'll expect colly-vlowers vrom turnip-zeed, and parſly to produce ſtrawberries. I marvel ſhe does not order nectarines to be zown in hot-beds, that they may grow as big as melons.

Part. 'Tis her way; but you muſt bear with her humour.

Rand. Oons, Zir, who can bear with zuch contradictions?

Part. Contradiction is natural to her, Randal; ſhe contradicts me, and all of us.

Rand. Marry, it may be natural to contradict you, becauſe you are her huſband; but zure, Zir, it cannot be natural to contradict nature.

Part. It was merely in contradiction to her friends, that, about twenty years ago, I got poſſeſſion of her hand; and then, in contradiction to me, ſhe the ſame night deny'd me that of her perſon.

Rand. Bleſs us! you did prevail though?

Part. Ay, by contradiction, or I muſt elſe have gone without her. I pretended, on a ſudden, a moſt violent antipathy, and made a ſham vow never to touch her while I breath'd; ſhe underſtood this, and in pure ſpite came to bed to me.

Rand. Laud, what a ſpirit ſhe has!——And yet, Meiſter, if you were to exert the huſband a little——

Part. Why, Randal, I love my wife: her only ſatisfaction is to do every thing directly contrary to mine, and

and I indulge her in her humour for peace ſake; otherwiſe ſhe is both prudent and virtuous.

Rand. In troth, Zir, you are zafe enough, upon that zcore. She is too much a waſp vor the vlies to follow her.

Part. Well, well, no more of this. I came hither, Randal, to conſult thee upon a very weighty affair. I have of late approv'd thy judgment in ſeveral particulars, and intend to make thee my confident.

Rand. Why, Meiſter, all my knowledge does not conſiſt in planting cabbages. Che had all my catechiſm by heart bevore che was zixteen. And but that my uncle the parſon, one Lent, took zurfeit and dy'd, he had promis'd to make me a great ſcholard.

Part. Why, thou may'ſt be one yet. Thou wilt not be the firſt philoſopher that has come out of a garden.

Rand. True, Meiſter! but what is your weighty affair with me?

Part. Why, it is concerning my daughter. I think ſhe is now turn'd of eighteen.

Rand. Ay, and a zweet poſey ſhe is vor the beſt gentleman in the land to wear next his heart.

Part. The girl is paſſable enough. She is my only child, and I have a mind to ſee her well married.

Rand. It is an holy purpoſe; and che dare zay, Miſs Harriet will join in it.

Part. The poor thing is all obedience. The only difficulty will be in gaining my wife's conſent.

Rand. You are right there, vaith, Meiſter: Vor if Madam take it in her head that you are for planting your daughter in the bed of matrimony, ſhe will be for ſtocking her up, and letting her die in virginity.

Part. That's my fear. You have heard, perhaps, that I have had a propoſal from two parties. The one is a gentleman of the army, every way worthy of her, I confeſs, but whoſe fortune is in expectancy; the other is our neighbour Steer the grazier, not quite ſo young indeed, nor ſo well bred as the other, but exceeding wealthy.

Rand. In troth, Meiſter, my choice ſhould go along with the acres: my young Miſtreſs is not worth a vig vor a long march.

Part.

Part. Why, that is my choice too. The firſt can ſettle no land but what lies in the field of honour; 'tis an eſtate of a precarious tenure.

Rand. Ay, believe me, a vield of clover is worth a hundred of it———But who is that turning out of the vilbert walk?

Part. Zooks, 'tis my wife!———I'll ſtep into yon arbour; and, d'you hear, Randal, make up your quarrel with her on any terms; for I have great need of thee at this time.

Randal. Ch'il do my beſt endeavour.

[*Grates his ſpade, and ſings.*

A gard'ner is a noble trade;
No arms ſo ancient as the ſpade:
Tho' kings with titles make a ſtir,
Their grandſire was a gardener.

Enter Mrs Partlet.

Mrs Part. Ceaſe this merriment, pray. Leſs noiſe and more work would ſpeak you a better ſervant. Was not that my huſband you were talking to juſt now?

Rand. Yes, Madam. Che was aſking my Meiſter a few queſtions.

Mrs Part. Queſtions! What bus'neſs have you to aſk queſtions, or he to anſwer them? I thought I had told you it was from me only you were to take directions. But you are a very, a very hypocrite, Sirrah! What, you have been wheedling and colloguing with him, have you? You have taken him for your protector! But you ſhall find both your miſtakes. Out of my doors you ſhall go, the moment your time's up.

Rand. I bezeech you, Madam———

Mrs Part. Yes, yes, you lay your wiſe heads together to thwart and contradict me: You are his adviſer, his counſellor, forſooth. He ſaid the other day that his gardener had good notions. A fine age, truly, when ſuch fellows as you ſhall pretend to have notions!

Rand. Che only beg, Madam——

Mrs Part. Your begging will be in vain; for I am reſolv'd you ſhall go. Nay, I know not what hinders me from turning you away this very inſtant.

Rand.

Rand. Why, that's my requeſt to you, Madam, if you wou'd but hear a body.

Mrs Part. And what is your requeſt, I pray?

Rand. That you wou'd be pleaſed to diſcharge me this inſtant. My Lady Evergreen wants a gard'ner, and has ſent this morning to hire me; and Meiſter has given his conſent to let me go.

Mrs Part. Your Meiſter has given his conſent to let you go? Fine doings, truly! And ſo I am to be left without a gardener! Was ever patience ſo abus'd! But you ſhall none of you have your wills. I ſay you ſhall not go this week: nay, perhaps you ſhall not go at all, ſince you are ſo haſty.

Rand. Madam, my Lady Evergreen will give me vorty ſhillings a-year more.

Mrs Part. Well, and are not my forty ſhillings a-year as good as my Lady Evergreen's?

Rand. Yes, Madam: but then your temper, an't pleaſe you——

Mrs Part. Bleſs me! I am a terrible bugbear! Every body harping upon my temper; when, I vow to heaven, there is not ſo mild or ſo reaſonable a perſon in the whole country.

Rand. But what every body zays, Madam——

Mrs Part. Every body is a liar, and none but fools believe every body. But no more; you ſhall ſtay at leaſt till my daughter's marriage is over.

Rand. And is Miſs Harriet to bê married zoon?

Mrs Part. What's that to you? May be, ay; may be, no; juſt as I ſhall think proper. Pray, what is your judgment upon the matter?

Rand. My judgment, you know, Madam, you never regarded. If che zet any thing in the zun, you always move it into the zhade.

Mrs Part. Come, come, your opinion and my huſband's, I ſuppoſe, are the ſame. Which of the two parties has his voice?

Rand. Madam, there wants a new handle to the ſcythe.

Mrs Part. Anſwer me, I ſay, to my queſtion.

Rand. Ods my life, how forgetful I am! you order'd the

the upper ground to be ſown with parſnips; ch'il go an prepare it this inſtant. [*Exi*

Mrs Part. This is a ſecret and a ſubtle knave! M huſband has certainly made his choice, and, if poſſible I muſt diſcover which way he is inclin'd. My daughte too, I ſuppoſe, has ſettled her fooliſh affection. But I'l baulk 'em both, or I'm not Mrs Partlet.

Enter Harriet *and* Betty.

Oh, are you come, daughter?—Walk off, minx. W don't want your company. [*Exit* Betty

Har. Pray, Madam, what is your pleaſure with m this morning?

Mrs Part. When you have done your prating, daughter, I'll tell you.

Har. I wait your commands, Madam.

Mrs Part. Why, I muſt tell you then, that I am much deceiv'd in you: I took you to be of a meek, plain-meaning temper, like my own: but I find you to be a ſly diſſembling huſſy; your father's ſpirit exactly!

Har. Pray, Madam, let me know in what I have offended.

Mrs Part. Nay, 'tis my fault; I am only too good and too indulgent, that's all: But I'll put it to you for the laſt time. Be ſincere with me, once in your life, and tell me, whether you have a mind to be married or not?

Har. I have already told you, Madam, that whilſt my parents are living, I ought to have no will of my own.

Mrs Part. But you muſt own you have one, notwithſtanding. Lookye, my dear, all that I ſeek is your ſatisfaction; therefore open your whole heart to me without reſerve ——Do you think that matrimony can make a young woman happy?

Har. There are ſome women, Madam, who think it the happieſt of ſtates; as, indeed, there are others who find it the moſt miſerable.

Mrs Part. Oh! then you utterly diſclaim marriage?

Har. I don't ſay ſo neither, Madam.

Mrs Part. What do you ſay then? Pry'thee explain your-

yourſelf. You muſt look upon it as a good or a bad thing; either to be coveted or avoided.

Har. Madam, I neither wiſh it nor fear it; 'tis a ſubject I have thought but very ſlightly on. The arguments for and againſt ſeem to be pretty near equal; ſo that I am as yet wholly indifferent.

Mrs Part. 'Tis that indifference diſtracts me, huſſy. You have too much ſenſe to continue in ſo fooliſh a ſtate.

Har. I preſume, Madam, it is the ſtate a daughter ought to continue in, that ſhe may ſubmit the more cheerfully to a mother's determination.

Mrs Part. Suppoſe I was to determine you a huſband?

Har. In ſuch a caſe, the reaſons for marriage would appear to me the ſtrongeſt.

Mrs Part. Why ſo, pray?

Har. Becauſe my duty to you wou'd oblige me to forget thoſe which are againſt it.

Mrs Part. What if I were to determine you to remain ſingle?

Har. Then, Madam, the reaſons againſt marriage only ſhou'd be hearken'd to.

Mrs Part. What ſhifts and evaſions are here! Bleſs me! I ſhall loſe all my patience! Shall it be ſaid then that I am unable to penetrate your true inclination?

Har. My inclination, Madam, is to be directed wholly by your's.

Mrs Part. Was there ever ſuch obſtinacy! perpetually contradicting me!

Har. Can a blind ſubmiſſion to your will be term'd contradiction?

Mrs Part. Yes, yes, it is, it is! For I wou'd have you have a will of your own, and you are pleas'd not to have one.

Har. But, Madam——

Mrs Part. Oh, I can bear it no longer! Hold your tongue, do.—Here again it will be ſaid that I am in the wrong, I warrant. But 'tis your's that may be truly call'd a ſpirit of contradiction. I am not able to live under the ſame roof with you. Such a ſlut as you is a perfect

fect peſtilence in a family. I'll get rid of you, I am reſolv'd. Yes, Miſs, I'll marry you this very day. There are two offers made, and I'll accept of one of them. Don't think I intend to give you your choice, no; you ſhall take him whom I approve of. I'll juſt ſtep in and talk with your father. If his notions are reaſonable, and agree with mine, well; if not, I know my meaſures.

[*Exit.*

Har. Under what conſtraint am I forc'd to live! tho' naturally artleſs and ſincere, yet am I oblig'd to counterfeit with all the world. My preſent ſituation requires it; for whom can I confide in? Ha, Lovewell return'd! Alas, he is one with whom, I confeſs, I have much ado to diſſemble.

Enter Lovewell.

I imagin'd you were on your journey, Mr Lovewell.

Love. No, Madam, I am come to tell you, in ſhort, that I am weary of being made a fool of, and that I am reſolved not to ſee London till you have finally explain'd yourſelf to me.

Har. Good, angry Sir, what is it diſcompoſes you?

Love. Your behaviour, Madam, has driven me beyond all patience. Have I not danc'd attendance after you near two years, when neither my love, prayers, or intreaties, have been able to draw from you one word upon which I might depend, either for happineſs or miſery? And when I ſpoke to you of the trueſt and moſt violent paſſion that ever touch'd the heart of man, you hear me with a calmneſs and inſenſibility which it is impoſſible to comprehend.

'*Har.* And I would have it ſtill impoſſible.

'*Love.* Surely, Madam, you might diſcover either 'approbation or diſlike; ſomething from whence I might 'know my fate.

'*Har.* You ought to know that I am prudent, and 'nothing farther. The happineſs of my life depends 'upon my being, at this time, impenetrable to your 'curioſity.

'*Love.* Make but that appear, and I ſhall be ſatiſ-'fied.'

Har. I thought you already knew, that, in conſequence of a certain ſcheme I have form'd to ſecure my future

future welfare; it is neceſſary that my mother, and even my father, ſhou'd be in the dark whether it is you whom I love or another: it is requiſite, therefore, that you alſo be kept ignorant of my real affection.

'*Love.* Wherefore muſt I?

'*Har.* Becauſe if you were once acquainted with it, 'my father, mother, and every one who obſerv'd you, 'would ſoon be in the ſecret.

'*Love.* Do you judge me ſo indiſcreet, when all my 'happineſs is depending?

'*Har.* No, but the natural violence of your temper 'would perform the part of indiſcretion.

'*Love.* [*compoſedly.*] Believe me, Madam, I know 'how to moderate that violence: and yet I proteſt to 'you, that one word of explanation, one ſingle word from 'thoſe dear lips, ſhall render me as calm and compos'd 'as yourſelf.

'*Har.* Suppoſe that word was, That I reſolv'd never 'to be your's.

'*Love.* [*paſſionately.*] Death and confuſion! what do 'you mean, Madam? By all that's ſacred——

'*Har.* I perceive, indeed, you are moſt wonderfully 'compos'd. Pray, would you be any more ſo were I to 'make a vow never to be another's?

'*Love.* O tranſporting thought! My deareſt Harriet, 'that would be kind indeed. The bleſt idea would ba-'niſh all deſpair, and give new ſtrength to my declining 'hopes; my joy wou'd be ſo abundantly full——

'*Har.* Yes, ſo full that it would run over to all you 'meet. Thus it is that your extravagant tranſports, ei-'ther of joy or deſpair, would undoubtedly divulge what 'it is my buſineſs to conceal: For the moment my mo-'ther cou'd be ſure whereon my happineſs was plac'd, 'ſhe would moſt certainly overturn it. Admit, there-'fore, for the preſent, I keep you wholly ignorant of 'my deſigns.

'*Love.* No, ungrateful one, this is too much; for I 'know, that I am not ignorant of your deſigns:' I have had information, Madam, that you are this day to be married to Mr Steer.

Har. Perhaps it may be true, what then?

Love. It was that brought me hither ſo ſuddenly.

Har. And let something as suddenly take you back again.

Love. I now see through all your little artifices. You know I am somewhat in your mother's favour, and therefore held fair with me lest my resentment shou'd make use of her to hinder your marriage.

'*Har.* Hinder it, Sir! Indeed I esteem you too gal-'lant a man to hinder a settlement so much to my ad-'tage.

'*Lov.* [*languishingly.*] No, cruel one, you need not 'fear it. If you can be happier with another, I will add 'to your joys by bidding you eternally farewell.'

Har. Lookye, Mr Lovewell, you may traverse my intentions a little; but if it be true that you have no place in my heart, you will never gain one by chagrining me. Do therefore as I advise, be seen to-day by neither my father or mother; I even order you not to appear here. If you have any regard for me, depart this instant.

Love. You know I must obey you; but if you deceive me, Harriet——

Har. As I promise nothing, there is no danger of your being deceiv'd.

Love. Unkind Harriet! Is it possible?

Har. Pray, no more. There's my father coming! Be gone this instant; fly, I say. [*Exit* Lovewell.

Enter Partlet.

Part. Where are you, daughter? Come, and rejoice with me, my girl. I am not able to contain myself, I shall even burst with joy.

Har. May I know the occasion of it, Sir?

Part. The day is our own, I tell you, the day is our own! Your mother and I are agreed, my girl! and every thing is to be exactly as I wou'd have it.

Har. Pardon me, Sir, if I doubt that.

Par. 'Tis true, I say; she has been making the proposal to me herself, and I have feign'd not to approve of it in order to confirm her in her resolution.

Har. Nay, if the proposal comes from her, the execution will soon follow.

Part. Yes, child; the great riches of our neighbour Steer have taken with your mother as well as with me.

In

In effect, a wealthy grazier is no such despicable offer. What if he does not bow quite so genteely as some of our foplings who frequent your balls and assemblies? he is wealthy, my girl, and I warrant will love thee.

Har. Two very engaging qualities indeed, Sir.

Part. His behaviour is, perhaps, a little more unpolish'd than one would wish it; but then there is no deceit in him.

Har. His sincerity, Sir, will make amends for that defect.

Part. He is thought, indeed, by some, to want sense.

Har. A very good circumstance, that, Sir!—For if he is without sense himself, he won't discover the want of it in me.

Part. Nay, mistake me not, he is no fool neither. He only wants to be broke of a custom he has got of talking too much in the phrase of his profession. Zooks, here he comes.

Enter Steer.

Steer. Good-morrow, good-morrow, neighbour; I cross'd the meadows this morning purely to take your judgment upon my new waistcoat here. I had it made on purpose to be marry'd in.

Part. Why, I think it a most magnificent one.

Steer. Ay, isn't it? I think to wear it on my wedding-day; and then lay it up, you must know, in case it should come into the King's head to prick me for sheriff.

Part. It is no bad contrivance.

Steer. Ay, ay, tho' I say it, let Bat. Steer alone for contrivance, ha, ha.—I can't help laughing to think what staring there will be in Smithfield to see me bedizen'd thus.

Part. You are well known there, 'tis like.

Steer. Known!—why, I have us'd the old ram—— ay, let me see—'tis now upwards of twenty years since I first us'd the old ram—Known! why, man, Bartholomew Steer is as well known in Smithfield as Bartholomew's hospital.

Part. I believe, Sir, my daughter there has escap'd your notice.

Steer. No, no, I have cast a sheep's eye at her, and will be about her presently: she's a good-like lass, 'faith,

—in right order, and fit to ſtart for the wedding-plate Come hither, my girl; how long will it be before you and I have a tumble together?

Har. A tumble, Sir! I don't underſtand you.

Part. Things are not ripe enough yet, neighbour.

Steer. Ripe! Ay, marry, but they be ripe as a cherry

Part. Ay, but I mean matters are not agreed upon between us.

Steer. No? Well then let's agree them. And, do you hear, wife that is to be, in the mean time do you fit yourſelf with a ring——Take the biggeſt, the biggeſt, you fool, you.

Har. I preſume, Sir, there are ſome previous ceremonies neceſſary to be ſettled firſt?

Steer. Previous! What's previous?

Part. Ay, ay, neighbour, we muſt deliberate a little.

Steer. Muſt we? come then, let's deliberate.

Har. Well then; and while you are deliberating, gentlemen, I believe it will be beſt for me to keep near my mother, leſt ſhe ſhould come and interrupt you.

Part. Do ſo, girl; and if you meet Randal in your way, tell him I would ſpeak with him.

Har. I ſhall, Sir—— [*Exit.*

Steer. Well, but now, neighbour, not to loſe time, let us ſpeak to the affair in hand. What fortune do you propoſe to give me, ſhould I accept of your daughter?

Part. Lookye, Mr Steer, whatever ſum I intend to give with her, I expect to have it doubled, and ſettled upon her children.

Steer. And theſe are the conditions?

Part. The very conditions.

Steer. Well then, to ſhow you I hate haggling, give me your hand, and if I croſs it, 'tis a bargain.

Part. There. [*Giving his hand.*

Steer. There, 'tis a bargain. This is our method in Smithfield. I have bought a hundred head of cattle in as ſhort a time.

Part. Good. And here comes Randal, moſt opportunely, to be a witneſs of it.

Enter Randal.

Well, Randal, have you conſider'd of the affair I ſpoke to you of?

Rand.

Rand. Yes, Zir. And I have a queſtion or two to aſk bevore I can give you my opinion.

Part. Aſk 'em.

Rand. Does this gentleman love your daughter?

Steer. Hugely.

Rand. And does ſhe like him?

Steer. Mightily, mightily.

Rand. And are you, Meiſter, willing?

Part. Yes.

Rand. And is Miſtreſs willing too?

Part. Yes, both willing.

Rand. And I am willing.

Steer. Why then all difficulties are remov'd, and there's no more to be ſaid.

Rand. Haud ye, haud ye, I ſay all difficulties are not remov'd, and there's a great deal more to be ſaid.

Part. As how, pray?

Rand. Why, as zoon as Madam comes to underſtand that you are all of one opinion, ſhe'll change her's to one directly contrary.

Part. I muſt needs own, that's her humour exactly.

Rand. For example—Have not you obſerv'd that the weather-cock upon the zummer-houſe always ſhifts away from the wind, zo that to zet it zouth-weſt, it muſt abſolutely blow vrom the north-eaſt corner.

Part. Right.

Rand. Now I look upon Madam to be, in this reſpect, a ſort of a weather-cock; and there's no vixing of her to one zide, but by blowing hard upon her vrom the other. That is to zay, that in order to carry your point, and make zure of Meiſter Steer vor a zon-in law, you muſt ſtill obſtinately inziſt upon giving your daughter to Mr Lovewell. And that's my counſel.

Part. And, if we ſucceed, Mr Counſellor ſhall have his fee.

Steer. Ay, ten guineas for Randal on the wedding-day.

Rand. Stay, there's another thing to be obſerv'd, or we ſhall never bring her to her vull pitch of contradiction.

Part. What's that?

Rand. Why, you'll find that Madam will be for ſigning the contract; 'tis beſt to give no time for reflection.

The lawyer muſt be in the zecret; the writings ready, only blanks left vor the name; and while you preſs her hand vor Mr Lovewell, ſhe'll zertainly, in pure contradiction, order the blanks to be villed up with Mr Steer's name, and zign the deed in a paſſion.

Part. Your advice is excellent, and ſhall be follow'd —Let us ſeparate, leſt my wife ſhould find us together. —I'll this inſtant to the lawyer, and order him to prepare the writings, to put our deſigns in execution. Bleſs me, what a ſtrange ſtate is a married one, when a man has no way of obtaining his deſires in it but by feigning to ſhun them!

Rand. True. For.

Huſbands like watermen muſt look and row;
For crabbed wives, like crabs, do backward go.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Enter Randal.

FLESH and blood is not able to bear this miſtreſs of mine! For let me toil and labour ever ſo hard, ſhe is ſure to find fault. Here have I been digging, planting, and watering, till the ſweat ran off my face, in hopes to pleaſe her, and all to no purpoſe; for whilſt I was wiping myſelf dry, in came Madam, in one of her uſual tantrams, and cry'd,—So, Randal, I am ſure to ſee you ſtand idling, according to cuſtom. Then, to prove to her how I had been ſlaving to pleaſe her, ſhow'd her what I had been doing; to which ſhe reply'd, in her accuſtom'd temper, This is what I wou'd not have had done. And when I inform'd her it was of her own ordering, ſhe flew in a rage, and cry'd, Let me find you without an excuſe, and hang you. So that the devil himſelf can do nought to pleaſe her. O' my conſcience, when ſhe's in thoſe perverſe humours, if a man were to tell her ſhe was a virtuous woman, ſhe wou'd ſpit in his face, and tell him he ly'd.—In this criſis, came my maſter to my relief, and calling Madam to him, ſaid he had bus'neſs with her; gave me the nod as to retire, in order, I ſuppoſe, to put our plan in execution, of fixing Mr Steer for his ſon-in-law: I took the hint, and left Madam poſſeſs'd with ſo fiery a compoſition, that if Meiſter

ſter has but ſufficient courage thoroughly to light her up, which he will certainly do by propoſing Mr Lovewell for his ſon-in-law, I don't doubt but in pure contradiction we ſhall carry our point—Hark! They ſeem coming this way. I'll ſtand aſide, and obſerve 'em.

[*Retires.*

Enter Mrs Partlet, *follow'd by* Partlet.

Mrs Part. No, huſband, this exceeds all bounds! Perpetually thwarting and plaguing me! But, ſince it pleaſes you, pray go on. But ſurely 'tis the very height of obſtinacy, to maintain that Mr Steer is not a proper match for my daughter.

Part. Nay, wife, I don't deny it: but as your daughter's welfare and happineſs is depending, it can be no great crime in me to ſay that I would prefer Mr Lovewell before him.

Mrs Part. Lookye, don't let me hear a word more about him; Mr Lovewell had not beſt ſhow his face in my houſe.

Part. Conſider, wife, both his merit and family.

Mrs Part What, wou'd you have my daughter follow the camp? I tell you, huſband, I am reſolv'd.

Part. Let me beſeech you, my dear, to indulge me ſo far as to condeſcend to me but in this.

Mrs Part. Once more, I tell you, I am reſolv'd; and as a proof, to-morrow morning I'll give my daughter to Mr Steer.

Part. But your reaſon, wife, for this haſte?

Mrs Part. The reaſon, huſband, is plain: And, to demonſtrate to you that I have reaſon, I ſhall only tell you, that it is ſo becauſe I will have it ſo. Mr Steer is, I believe, now in the houſe; and I'll this inſtant go and acquaint him with my reſolutions: And do you hear, huſband, I'd have you prepar'd to ſign the articles within this half hour. [*Exit.*

Part. Well, Randal, what ſay you? Did I play my part with dexterity, or not?

Rand. Evaith, Zir, I believe this time you'll have your way; and perhaps 'tis the zecond in your whole life.

Part. Yes, I think we ſhall ſucceed now. Is the lawyer come?

Rand.

Rand. I'll ſtep and zee, and then come and join the cry vor Mr Lovewell. She's in right temper now; and if you don't ſtrike, you deſerve to loſe the heat.

[*Exit.*

Enter Harriet.

Part. So, daughter, we have done miracles, my girl!

Har. I overheard you; I was but in the arbour with Mr Ruin the lawyer, who is juſt now come, and waits to ſpeak with you.

Part. Odſo! he is come very opportunely; I muſt go and ſettle matters with him before your mother ſees him.

[*Exit.*

Har. So, things are at laſt come to the criſis I expected, and it is high time to bring my poor ſtratagem into play; and if that fails, good b'ye happineſs for ever! Oh, here comes Betty.

Enter Betty.

Well, Betty, have you got your leſſon perfect?

Betty. Yes, Madam, and without much ſtudying. I think you want me to lie and diſſemble a little.

Har. And are you a proficient in thoſe arts?

Betty. I were unworthy to ſerve a lady elſe.

Har. Well, Betty, I ſhall put myſelf entirely into your hands.

Betty. And, depend upon it, I'll put you into thoſe of Mr Lovewell's.

Har. I hope you'll not deceive me.

Betty. If I do, Madam, may my lover deceive me on my wedding-night! and that's a moſt fearful wiſh, I can tell you, for a chambermaid's conſcience.

Har. Take heed what you promiſe, for the proof is at hand. My mother is coming cloſe here behind us to liſten; we muſt feign not to ſee her. I ſhall but juſt give the alarm, and leave you, girl, to fight the battle.

Enter Mrs Partlet, *liſtening.*

Yes, Betty, my mother will, this time, be over-reach'd by us all; and I ſhall be the happieſt young woman in England. Ha, ha! I muſt go and laugh a little with my father about it. Step you in and plait my beſt head; and dy'e hear, be ſure don't blab. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*

Betty. Ha, ha! blab? I think not, truly. [*Turns ſhort*

ſhort on Mrs Partlet] Laud, Madam, you ſo ſurpriſe a body!

Mrs Part. I am a ſtrange hobgoblin, ſure! If it were one of the fellows, you had not been ſurpris'd, I warrant—What were you tittering at, my daughter and you?

Betty. Bleſs me, Madam, we were not tittering.

Mrs Part. What a lie to my face? Yes, and I'll know the ſubject of your mirth before you and I part. Who is it that is to be over-reach'd, pray? What was my daughter ſaying to you before I came?

Betty. Saying, Madam—why, Miſs was ſaying, ſhe was ſaying as how—indeed, Madam, I can't tell what ſhe was ſaying, not I——

Mrs Part. Tell me the truth, and I'll give you my green mantua, and forgive you the china jar you broke yeſterday; but if you equivocate, I'll turn you out of the houſe this moment.

Betty. I ſhould be loth to leave ſo good a lady's ſervice.

Mrs Part. Speak then, and ſtay in it.

Betty. May I depend on't, Madam, that you won't name your author?

Mrs Part. I promiſe you I will not.

Betty. I am ſure they wou'd poiſon me if they knew I betray'd 'em.

Mrs Part. Fear nothing, I tell you.

Betty. Are you certain [*looking about*] we cannot be overheard, Madam?

Mrs Part. 'Tis impoſſible. Come, I'm upon thorns till you begin—What, there is a conſpiracy againſt me, I ſuppoſe.

Betty. A very dangerous one, Madam. You were to have been betray'd into a compliance with my maſter's will and pleaſure.

Mrs Part. O abominable!

Betty. Miſs Harriet and he have join'd with Randal, to perſuade you of their averſion to Mr Steer, on purpoſe to palm him upon you for a ſon-in-law by contradiction.

Mrs Part. Execrable, unheard-of wickedneſs! Mr Steer, then, is my huſband's real choice?

Betty.

Betty. Yes, Madam, my maſter has given him his ſo lemn promiſe; and Miſs Harriet ſays 'tis impoſſible ſh ſhould be happy without him.

Mrs Part. They might well talk of over-reachin truly! Oh, this was a moſt fortunate diſcovery! But I' fit them for it.—Well, huſband and daughter, I ſhall ſho you a trick that ſhall cure you of over-reaching. And I was to have been their dupe, their fool, their inſtru ment!

Betty. Yes, Madam; my maſter ſaid, that this tim you ſhould ſubmit to his deciſion.

Mrs Part. Submit! did he ſay ſubmit? Monſtrou audacious, inſupportable inſolence! O deteſtable! Sub mit! the word chokes me, Betty; I am not able to g it down: get me the hartſhorn! [*Exit* Betty.] I am be ſieg'd here in my own houſe! beſet round, and every on I meet is an enemy! Ha, here comes my huſband, m grand adverſary of all. I'll compoſe myſelf as well as can—Submit!

Enter Partlet *and* Randal.

Rand. [*aſide to* Partlet.] Cheer up, Meiſter; do yo ſtand to it that you'll have none of Mr Steer for you ſon-in-law, you ſhall find he'll be the only man impos' upon you.

Part. Wife, I have been ſeeking you, to talk to yo farther about our laſt diſcourſe, our daughter's marriage and as it is an affair of the utmoſt conſequence to us al wherein not only the happineſs of our child, but our own is concern'd, I think we ought not to be too raſh i our choice.

Mrs Part. Good, wife huſband, I ſhou'd be glad t know your ſentiments upon the affair.

Part. My ſentiments you have never regarded: at ou laſt interview you abſolutely reſolved on Mr Steer for ou ſon-in-law; and I am to tell you in plain terms, Ma dam, that neither I nor my daughter will have an thing to ſay to him.

Mrs Part. Pray ſpeak mildly, my dear, I love peac and unity, and ſhall readily condeſcend to you, not onl in this, but in every thing elſe that is reaſonable.

Part. Look'ye, Madam, you may jeſt, with you condeſcenſions, as much as you pleaſe; but I am in ear

nes

neſt when I tell you that Mr Steer is one I ſhall never approve of.

Mrs Part. Believe me, my dear, when I once more aſſure you that your choice ſhall determine mine; and as a proof, I tell you that Mr Steer is already out of my thoughts.

Rand. Reſolutely perſiſt in it, Meiſter—the alarum is not quite wound up yet; it will ſtrike preſently.

Part. Come, ſpeak plain, Madam, and think me worthy of a ſerious anſwer: know, I am not always to be made a fool of.

Mrs Part. But why are you angry, my dear, ſince I give my word to do juſt as you deſire? And, to ſhow you my ſincerity, as well as my ſubmiſſion, I'll go this inſtant and forbid Mr Steer from ever ſetting his feet within theſe doors again. [*Exit.*

Part. [*after a pauſe.*] Randal!

Rand. Zir!

Part. What ſay'ſt thou to this, man?

Rand. Nay, let the moon zay, vor ſhe knows beſt. There's inchantment in this, Meiſter.

Part. I am afraid it is too real. What the devil can make her ſo complying this morning?

Rand. I'll not believe but the vairies have been here.

Part. I am ſtrangely unfortunate, that the only time in her life that ſhe does not contradict me at all, ſhould be to contradict me the moſt.

Rand. To comply zo with your will, I confeſs, Zir, is ſtrangely unnatural.

Part. So unnatural, that I am all amazement——but I'll follow her in, and, if poſſible, find out the bottom of it. [*Exit.*

Rand. Zo, there's an end of my plotting and politics!——I ſhall never have my advice aſk'd again, that's certain. Not that I'll give it up neither; for there's ſo little dependence on Madam's word, that it goes and comes like the ſun in April.

Enter Steer.

Steer. Well, old ſophiſter; what, matters go on ſwimmingly, it ſeems! The articles are preparing within to be ſign'd. I muſt look out the ten guineas——there's comfort for thee, old boy.

Rand.

Rand. Madam is looking out to give you your dif charge—there's comfort for you, old boy.

Steer. What! ſhe is not ſo mad, ſure, as to refuſe m for her ſon-in-law?

Rand. I'm afraid 'tis too true; ſtrange changes hav happen'd within this half hour! But Meiſter is now witl her.——I'll ſtep in and liſten a while, and endeavour t bring you a more perfect account. [*Exit*

Steer. Do ſo—What, not have this little gipſy at laſt —But if I can't have her, why I muſt look out elſe where; hang it! I have a ſort of kindneſs for the young huſſy too.—But he that has coin needs not want kine, as the ſaying is——Oh here ſhe comes.

Enter Harriet.

So, poor girl! What, things go ill on thy ſide, I hear. Thou art in danger of loſing me, they ſay. Troth, I pity thee with all my heart.

Har. Something has fallen out a little unſeaſonably, Sir.

Seeer. And thou art griev'd about it, my girl, ha! I am very glad on't with all my heart, 'tis a proof that thou lov'ſt me. But come, don't be caſt down, don't deſpair; live in hopes; perhaps thou may'ſt have me yet.

Har. If it is your deſire, there is no time to be loſt; go this inſtant to my mother; preſs her, importune her, and peremptorily inſiſt upon the performance of her promiſe—Hah, Lovewell! what brings him here?

Enter Lovewell.

Love. You'll excuſe the abruptneſs of this viſit, Madam, when I come to aſſure you that 'tis the laſt I ſhall ever make you.

Har. If you had ſpar'd yourſelf the trouble of this, I ſhould eaſily have forgiven it.

Love. I know it, falſe one, for I am at laſt convinc'd; that which I have heard to-day; your diſcourſe this morning; your affectation to ſend me away; the lawyer whom I have ſeen here; in ſhort, all together confirm your treachery paſt doubt——But I intend to keep my temper———and tell you, you are unworthy every thing but contempt and ſilence.

Har. I wou'd willingly be inform'd, Sir, on what pretence

tence you dare insult me thus? or what hopes have I ever given you, that you shou'd presume to take this liberty?

Love. Had you discourag'd my addresses, I shou'd, tho' with pain, have desisted; but as you rejected them not, I fed my imagination with the vain hopes that my suit was agreeable. Credulous fool! thus to amuse myself, and suffer my passion to be so deluded, by the artful wiles of a deceitful woman.

Steer. Harkye, friend, dost thou call this wooing?

Love. Grant me patience, heav'n!

Har. Lookye, Sir, since you provoke me to speak, cou'd my father hesitate a moment between the large estate of Mr Sneer and your slender fortune? And as for my part, I cannot but prefer the open easy temper of this gentleman, to that serious, passionate turn of mind you always appear in. His jests and good-humour are infinitely more engaging than your wild frantic sallies.

Steer. Ay, ay, I have always heard that women love mirth and good company; and tho' the lot has fallen upon me, lookye, friend, don't be cast down; such a pretty fellow as you need never despair.

Love. Lookye, Madam, order your fool there to be mannerly, or it may chance to cost him a beating.

Steer. A beating! I shou'd be glad to see that, faith; and if thou dost beat me, I'll forgive thee with all my heart; and for thy pains, if thou'lt call on me at Smithfield on a market-day, I'll give thee a beef-steak and a bottle into the bargain. [*Going up to him.*]

Love. Oons! you——

Har. [*interposing.*] Lookye, Mr Lovewell, either keep your temper, or leave the place; I have ever told you that I hate passionate people.

Steer. 'Egad, and so do I with all my heart; I'll e'en step in to your father. Pry'thee, my dear, get rid of this troublesome fellow as fast as you can, and then come to us; there's a good girl! [*Exit.*

Love. Your proceedings, Madam, appear to me so extravagant, that I cou'd almost suspect you of feigning. Not that I wou'd flatter myself with such a vain thought. However, if the presence of Mr Steer might any way

conſtrain you, he is now gone, and you may freely clear yourſelf.

Enter Mrs Partlet, *privately.*

Mrs Part. Ha, my daughter alone with Lovewell! [*Aſide.*

Love. Either juſtify yourſelf, or confeſs you have wrong'd me. Come, ſpeak, Madam, as we are now alone.

Har. [*obſerving her mother.*] Ha! my mother!—— Sir, there was no diſſembling in the matter. I ſhall ſay the ſame thing now we are alone, which I ſaid before Mr Steer. My father is deſirous I ſhou'd accept him for a huſband, and I declare it is the greateſt ſatisfaction I can receive.

Love. This is beyond all patience to ſupport: but I have done; I'll to your mother, and let her know, tho' I have hitherto conceal'd my paſſion from her, how I have been treated by her ungrateful daughter. [*Going.*

Har. Yes, go to my mother, I adviſe you; and, d'ye hear, tell her how much I hate and deſpiſe you.

Love. I thank you, Madam; and thus I bid an eternal adieu to the falſeſt of her ſex.

Mrs Part. Hold, Mr Lovewell; I have partly heard how you have been treated, and think your wrongs invite compaſſion. I plainly perceive that my huſband and daughter are combin'd to adviſe both you and me. I ſhall therefore make your caſe my own; for, tho' I ſay it, there is no one conforms to other peoples opinions more than myſelf.

Love. I am obliged to you, Madam; but after the baſe uſage I have receiv'd from your daughter, my only care ſhall be now to forget her.

Mrs Part. I muſt confeſs that I had heretofore no intention of propoſing my daughter, but to demonſtrate to you, who are a reaſonable perſon, that reaſon only is the guide of my actions, I frankly make you an offer of her; for, believe me, it will give me an infinite deal of pleaſure to revenge me of my huſband and daughter; for every body, you muſt know, conſpires to thwart and contradict me; therefore let me intreat your acceptance ——

Love. Indeed, Madam, you muſt excuſe me; ſince your daughter denies me her heart, I muſt refuſe her hand.

Mrs

Mrs Part. What, do *you* contradict me too? Nay, Sir, I will make it so advantageous a match to you, that you shall be oblig'd to take her whether you will or no.

Har. I hope, Madam, you don't mean to engage me against my will?

Mrs Part. Your will, my dear? What, have you forgot already that you ought to have no will of your own?

Har. Alas, Madam, when I said it, there was but little sincerity in those words. Why wou'd you go to hinder my marriage with a man of Mr Steer's fortune?

Mrs Part. Huffy, Mr Lovewell has more fortune than you deserve.

Har. Let me live and die a maid, rather than be join'd to a man I have an aversion to.

Mrs Part. Hold your tongue; I'm resolv'd it shall be so.

Har. [*kneels and weeps.*] I conjure you, Madam, not to render my whole life unhappy.

Mrs Part. Rise, I say, for I am inflexible.

Har. For heaven's sake, Madam, have pity on me.

Mrs Part. Yes, you deserve it, truly. Know that I am acquainted with all your little subtilties. You wou'd have betray'd me, expos'd me to a compliance with your father's will and pleasure!—But to punish you, Miss, I'll make you *both* sign the articles that you had prepar'd together to deceive me; I'll go and order the blanks instantly to be fill'd up with the name of Lovewell.

[*Exit.*

Love. Stay, Madam—I wou'd not have you imagine I shall ever sign them. No, I wou'd sooner perish than marry your daughter.

Har. I wou'd sooner perish than marry your daughter!——Bless me, Mr Lovewell, how emphatically you pronounc'd those words.

Love. I pronounc'd them as I meant 'em, Madam.

Har. And as, from my soul, I wish'd 'em; and, to deal sincerely with you, that you shou'd speak them in a manner to affect my mother, it was necessary they shou'd come from your heart. You had never deceiv'd her so well, if you had not been first deceiv'd yourself.

Love. Explain your meaning, pray.

Har. Why thus, then. To gain my mother's consent to my wiſhes, I have been oblig'd to lead my father alſo into an error. He, good man, has acted naturally in the affair; and when I found they were one and all for Mr Steer, I made uſe of Betty to acquaint my mother of it. The girl has acted her part to a miracle. And this is the reaſon, that, ſeeing every body againſt you, ſhe has thought fit to take your part, that ſhe may contradict every body; and ſhe wou'd now conſtrain you to marry me in order to make you contradict yourſelf.

Love. Deareſt Harriet, 'you have put muſic into my 'heart that will make it dance for my whole life. Juſt 'now I was quite benighted in deſpair; but you have, 'in three words,' ſo dazzled me with happineſs, that I want faculties to perceive it.

Har. I wou'd not have you perceive it till the articles are ſign'd. I ſhall dread ſome indiſcreet tranſport, that may perhaps ſpoil all. No, Mr Lovewell, I wou'd not have you yet convinc'd that you are dear to me.

Love. [*tranſported.*] Enchanting ſounds! O how ſhall I be worthy of ſuch goodneſs! My kindeſt, deareſt, adorable miſtreſs!

Har. Huſh, I hear ſteps this way. We muſt by all means continue to diſſemble.

Enter Randal.

No, Mr Lovewell, don't imagine you ſhall ever marry me againſt my will.

Rand. I believe not, vaith, vor it would be with all your heart and with all your zoul. I have long ſuſpected it, and am now convinc'd that all your quarrels were feign'd, pretended, mere ſham ones, deſign'd purely to cheat my miſtreſs; but that ſhe might not be ſo impos'd on, I have been juſt letting her into the ſecret.

Har. Oh, Mr Lovewell, we are ruin'd then for ever!

Love. Wretch, what haſt thou done?

Rand. I can't help it now, vor Madam is coming to undo all her doings again; and the reaſon why I inform'd her, was becauſe Mr Steer had promis'd me ten guineas on his wedding-day.

Love. Raſcal, why did you not aſk me fifty?

Rand. Nay, nay, it won't zignify now, ſince Madam knows

knows all—Nevertheleſs, if I were to zee that ſame vifty you mention——

Har. What then?

Rand. Why then, perhaps things may not go ſo bad as you imagine.

Love. Here, take my purſe.—And now, good Randal——

Rand. And now, Zir, to ſpeak truth, and ſhame the Devil, Madam knows nought about it——But that you may not think your money ill beſtow'd, I will ſay ſomething for you to Madam that ſhall deſerve it; and, luckily, yonder ſhe's coming.

Enter Mrs Partlet, Betty *following.*

I'm glad you are come to make peace, Madam; I vound the young volk here juſt going to vighting. They did ſo wrangle and jangle together, that, vor my part, I thought they had been married already,

Mrs Part. What, daughter, do you continue obſtinate? Lookye, huſſy, you had beſt conform to your duty, or I ſhall ſend you to your aunt in Cumberland to watch geeſe upon a common,

Enter Mr Steer.

I thought, Sir, I had given you your diſcharge, and forbad you ever coming within theſe doors; after which, let me tell you, I look upon it to be a piece of inſolence to appear here again; therefore, Sir, pray walk out.

Steer. Wounds, woman, I only came to give my ſweetheart a buſs at parting; I hope there's no great harm in that.

Enter Lawyer.

Mrs Part. So, Mr Ruin, I am glad you are come; is every thing done exactly as I directed?

Ruin. Yes, Madam, all is ready for executing.

Mrs Part. Tell John to bring a table, and bid my huſband attend this moment. [*To* Betty.

Bet. Yes, Madam.—My maſter is here. [*Exit.*

Enter Partlet.

A table brought on. Betty *returns.*

Part. Wife, give me leave, for the laſt time, to remonſtrate to you——

Mrs Part. Huſband, ſhow no airs here——Remonſtrate! Pray, Sir, who made you a remonſtrator?

Ruin. Madam, may I be ſo bold as to ſpeak one word, while I may do it in time? The young lady's concern affects me. I have always obſerv'd that theſe forc'd marriages——

Mrs Part. What, Mr Ruin, are you too againſt poor Mr Lovewell and me? There wanted only you to make the oppoſition complete. Come, give me the pen. [*She ſigns.*] Here Harriet, do you ſign under me. Don't be refractory.

Har. I muſt ſign, ſince you command me. [*Signs.*] There, Madam——but my comfort is, you can't make my father ſign.

Mrs Part. That, child, we ſhall try. Come, huſband, you who can adviſe and remonſtrate, write your name here—quickly, you had beſt.

Part. I'll ſign for quietneſs ſake, ſince it can ſignify nothing [*ſigns*]; for I am ſure you can't force Mr Lovewell.

Mrs Part. Sir, to oblige you alſo to join your hand, I have ordered a clauſe here, to confirm to you, over and above the ſum propos'd, a gift of a thouſand pound at the birth of the firſt child.

Love. 'Tis not thoſe gifts that I covet; but ſince it will oblige you, Madam, I'll ſign. [*Signs.*]—Here, Mr Ruin, take the articles, and depart quickly, leſt my mother-in-law ſhou'd recant.

Ruin. The deed is irrevocable. [*Exit.*

Love. Now, my deareſt, you are my own; and thus I take poſſeſſion.

Har. O dear Mr Lovewell, kiſs me as much as you pleaſe, but pray, don't eat me.

Mrs Part. [*amaz'd*] I am all amazement! What means all this tranſport? Does ſhe then really love him at laſt?

Rand. I told you Miſs Harriet lik'd ſomething polite; but you'll ne'er believe one.

Betty. The green mantua, Madam, I beg leave to remind you of.

Part. This ſudden unexpected change, I muſt confeſs, ſurpriſes me. My chief aim was to ſee my daughter

ter well provided for: and since I find my child is pleas'd, I'll e'en be pleas'd too.

Mrs Part. Pleas'd! O heavens, have I been such a tame, harmless turtle, as to please a husband at last! I am betray'd, robb'd, cheated, and abus'd.—But—

Love. [*kneeling with* Har.] Madam, thus low we implore your pardon for this innocent deceit; and let love excuse what faults have been committed.

Mrs Part. [*turning away.*] I will never forgive you; never, never, never.

Part. Why, you sign'd voluntarily, wife; you was not compell'd, as we were.

Mrs Part. No matter, I'll this instant to London for advice.——I'll be divorc'd from my husband; I'll never see the face of my daughter more; my servants shall be sent to Bridewell; and the lawyer shall be put in the pillory. You have made me mad amongst you, and you shall feel the effects on't.

Steer. Ay, goody, but curst cows have short horns.

Mrs Part. Out, bullock. [*Gives him a box o' th' ear.* [*Exit.*

Love. I am concern'd to see my mother so violent.

Steer. By George, I am concern'd to feel her so.

Har. Be it my care to appease her: be it your's, Mr Lovewell, to reward this girl, to whose services we, in great part, owe our present happiness.

Love. As Betty has made me happy in a wife, the way to be even with her, is to make her a fortune for some honest man that may be worthy of her.

Steer. That care shall be mine, if Betty pleases. I came hither for a wife, and it shall never be said that Bat Steer went to market and could not deal. What say you to the bargain, girl? Wilt thou strike me, or not?

Bet. The honour, Sir, is too great to be refus'd.

Steer. Why then, touch here, wench; and when the parson has conjur'd over us a little, thou shalt find that I know how to tumble a bed, as well as thou to make one. Give me but fair play, and if thou dost not own thou hast met with a man to thy mind, I'll give thee leave to plant me a pair of horns that shall reach from Hicks's Hall to Pye-Corner.

Part.

Part. I dare warrant Betty proves a good wife; and ſince you have thought fit to match into the family, neighbour Steer, I inſiſt that the two weddings be kept together. Here is Randal can ſcrape a little; and egad we'll have a jubilee.

Steer. Odsfleſh, neighbour Partlet, you are a hearty cock, and I accept your offer. And that your concert may be complete, I'll ſummon down the whole band of White-Chappel cleavers. A nod of mine will fetch 'em.

Love. When contradiction fain would bear the ſway,
'Tis juſt and right to baffle all its play;
That ſocial peace in every houſe may reign,
And love and merit due reward obtain.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs WARD,

Who plays the Character of *Mrs Partlet.*

BE witneſs all, how cruelly I'm us'd;
How patience in poor women is abus'd!
Not huſband, daughter, friend, or ſervant true:
My laſt hope, gentlemen, remains in you;
Surely you will not contradict me too.
Ladies, I know you'll take the injur'd part;
Diſtreſs will always reach the tender heart.
Nay, ſome will ſurely make the cauſe their own;
There are, I truſt, more Partlets here than one.
In two ſhort words all wifehood's underſtood;
In thoſe that do controul,—and thoſe that wou'd.
Well fare the firſt;—and let—the humble fool
Deſpiſe her vows, and come to me to ſchool.
The wives are with me; and what maid, I wonder,
But hopes, one of theſe days, to keep a huſband under?
You huſbands that are tittering yonder, mum;
You think me copy'd from your piece at home.
Each good-man finds the character ſo pat,
There's no perſuading but his Juno ſat.
Some ſaucy cit, or, poſſibly, ſome peer,
May, by-and-by, at ſupper, ſay—My dear,
Have we, of late, had any poet here?

Not

EPILOGUE.

Not ſo thoſe gallery friends I yonder ſpy
Sitting demurely with their Partlets by;
They at the comic ſcene wou'd burſt with laughter,
Did they not fear, poor ſouls, that tragedy'd come after.
Peace, peace, your ſilence we accept as praiſe;
A ſleeping hornet who wou'd wiſh to raiſe?
Pity your ears ſhou'd ſuffer for your zeal;
Smile you, who dare not clap,——'twill do as well.
Grant all one boon, and ſpare the bard's affliction,
Let me alone poſſeſs the Spirit of Contradiction.

THE

THE PATRON.

IN THREE ACTS.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

	Hay-Market.
Sir Thomas Lofty, *Sir Peter Pepperpot*,	Mr Foote.
Dick Bever,	Mr Death.
Frank Younger,	Mr Davis.
Sir Roger Dowlas,	Mr Palmer.
Mr Ruft,	Mr Weſton.
Mr Dactyl,	Mr Granger.
Mr Puff,	Mr Hayes.
Mr Staylape,	Mr Brown.
Robin,	Mr Parſons.
John,	Mr Lewis.
Two Blacks,	

WOMAN.

Miſs Juliet,	Mrs Granger.

ACT I.

Scene, *The Street.*

Enter Bever *and* Younger.

Younger.

NO, Dick, you muſt pardon me.

Bev. Nay, but to ſatisfy your curioſity.

Youn. I tell you, I have not a jot.

Bev. Whyithen to gratify me.

Youn. At rather too great an expence.

Bev. To a fellow of your obſervation and turn, I ſhould think, now, ſuch a ſcene a moſt delicate treat.

Youn. Delicate! Palling, nauſeous, to a dreadful degree. To a lover, indeed, the charms of the niece may palliate the uncle's fulſome formality.

Bev. The uncle! ay; but then you know he is only one of the group.

Youn. That's true; but the figures are all finiſh'd alike. A *maniere*, a tireſome ſameneſs, throughout.

Bev. There you will excuſe me; I am ſure there is no want of variety.

Youn. No! then let us have a detail. Come, Dick, give us a bill of the play.

Bev. Firſt, you know, there's Juliet's uncle.

Youn. What, Sir Thomas Lofty! the modern Midas, or rather (as fifty dedications will tell you), the Pollio, the Atticus, the patron of genius, the protector of arts, the paragon of poets, decider of merit, chief juſtice of taſte, and ſworn appraiſer to Apollo and the tuneful nine. Ha, ha! Oh, the tedious, inſipid, inſufferable coxcomb!

Bev. Nay, now, Frank, you are too extravagant. He is univerſally allow'd to have taſte; ſharp-judging Adriel, the muſe's friend, himſelf a muſe.

Youn. Taſte! by whom? underling bards that he feeds, and broken bookſellers that he bribes. Look ye, Dick; what raptures you pleaſe when Miſs Lofty is your theme, but expect no quarter for the reſt of the family. I tell thee once for all, Lofty is a rank impoſtor, the bufo of an illiberal mercenary tribe; he has neither genius to create, judgment to diſtinguiſh, nor generoſity to reward; his wealth has gain'd him flattery from the indigent, and the haughty inſolence of his pretence, admiration from the ignorant. *Voilà le portrait de votre oncle!* Now on to the next.

Bev. The ingenious and erudite Mr Ruſt.

Youn. What, old Martin the medal-monger?

Bev. The ſame, and my rival in Juliet.

Youn. Rival! what, Ruſt? why, ſhe's too modern for him by a couple of centuries. Martin! why he likes no heads but upon coins. Marry'd! the mummy! Why 'tis not above a fortnight ago, that I ſaw him making love to the

the figure without a nose in Somerset-gardens: I caugh him stroaking the marble plaits of her gown, and aske him if he was not ashamed to take such liberties with la dies in public.

Bev. What an inconstant old scoundrel it is!

Youn. Oh, a Dorimont. But how came this about what could occasion the change? was it in the power o flesh and blood to seduce this adorer of virtù from hi marble and porphyry?

Bev. Juliet has done it; and, what will surprise you his taste was a bawd to the business.

Youn. Prythee explain.

Bev. Juliet met him last week at her uncle's: he was a little pleased with the Greek of her profile; but, on a closer inquiry, he found the turn-up of her nose too exactly resemble the bust of the princess Popæa.

Youn. The chaste moiety of the amiable Nero?

Bev. The same.

Youn. Oh, the deuce! then your business was done in an instant.

Bev. Immediately. In favour of the tip, he offered *chart blanche* for the rest of the figure; which (as you may suppose) was instantly caught at.

Youn. Doubtless. But who have we here?

Bev. This is one of Lofty's companions, a West Indian of an overgrown fortune. He saves me the trouble of a portrait. This is Sir Peter Pepperpot.

Enter Sir Peter Pepperpot, *and* two Blacks.

Sir Pet. Careless scoundrels! harkee, rascals! I'll banish you home, you dogs! you shall back, and broil in the sun. Mr Bever, your humble; Sir, I am your entirely devoted.

Bev. You seem mov'd; what has been the matter, Sir Peter?

Sir Pet. Matter! why, I am invited to dinner on a barbicu, and the villains have forgot my bottle of chian.

Youn. Unpardonable.

Sir Pet. Ay, this country has spoil'd them; this same christening will ruin the colonies.——Well, dear Bever, rare news, boy; our fleet is arriv'd from the West.

Bev. It is?

Sir Pet. Ay, lad, and a glorious cargo of turtle. It was

was lucky I went to Brighthelmſtone; I nick'd the time to a hair; thin as a lath, and a ſtomach as ſharp as a ſhark's: never was in finer condition for feeding.

Bev. Have you a large importation, Sir Peter?

Sir Pet. Nine; but ſeven in excellent order: the Captain aſſures me they greatly gain'd ground on the voyage.

Bev. How do you diſpoſe of them?

Sir Pet. Four to Cornhill, three to Almack's, and the two ſickly ones I ſhall ſend to my borough in Yorkſhire.

Youn. Ay! what, have the Provincials a reliſh for turtle?

Sir Pet. Sir, it is amazing how this country improves in turtle and turnpikes; to which (give me leave to ſay) we, from our part of the world, have not a little contributed. Why formerly, Sir, a brace of bucks on the Mayor's annual day was thought a pretty moderate bleſſing. But we, Sir, have poliſh'd their palates: Why, Sir, not the meaneſt member of my corporation but can diſtinguiſh the paſh from the pee.

Youn. Indeed!

Sir Pet. Ay, and ſever the green from the ſhell with the ſkill of the ableſt anatomiſt.

Youn. And are they fond of it?

Sir Pet. Oh, that the conſumption will tell you. The ſtated allowance is ſix pounds to an alderman, and five to each of their wives.

Bev. A plentiful proviſion.

Sir Pet. But there was never known any waſte. The mayor, recorder, and rector, are permitted to eat as much as they pleaſe.

Youn. The entertainment is pretty expenſive.

Sir Pet. Land-carriage, and all. But I contriv'd to ſmuggle the laſt that I ſent them.

Bev. Smuggle! I don't underſtand you.

Sir Pet. Why, Sir, the raſcally coachman had always charged me five pounds for the carriage. Damn'd dear! Now my cook going at the ſame time into the country, I made him clap a capuchin upon the turtle, and for thirty ſhillings put him an inſide paſſenger in the Doncaſter fly.

Youn. A happy expedient.

Bev. Oh, Sir Peter has infinite humour.

Sir Pet. Yes; but the frolic had like to have prov'd fatal.

Youn. How ſo?

Sir Pet. The maid at the Rummer, at Hatfield, popp'd her head into the coach, to know if the company would have any breakfaſt: ecod, the turtle, Sir, laid hold of her noſe, and flapp'd her face with his fins, till the poor devil fell into a fit. Ha, ha, ha!

Youn. Oh, an abſolute Rabelais.

Bev. What, I reckon, Sir Peter, you are going to the ſquire?

Sir Pet. Yes; I extremely admire Sir Thomas: you know this is his day of aſſembly; I ſuppoſe you will be there: I can tell you, you are a wonderful favourite.

Bev. Am I?

Sir Pet. He ſays your natural genius is fine; and, when poliſh'd by his cultivation, will ſurpriſe and aſtoniſh the world.

Bev. I hope, Sir, I ſhall have your voice with the public.

Sir Pet. Mine! O fie, Mr Bever.

Bev. Come, come, you are no inconſiderable patron.

Sir Pet. He, he, he! Can't ſay but I love to encourage the arts.

Bev. And have contributed largely yourſelf.

Youn. What, is Sir Peter an author?

Sir Pet. O fie! what, me? a mere dabbler; have blotted my fingers, 'tis true. Some ſonnets, that have not been thought wanting in ſalt.

Bev. And your epigrams.

Sir Pet. Not entirely without point.

Bev. But come, Sir Peter, the love of the arts is not the ſole cauſe of your viſits to the houſe you are going to.

Sir Pet. I don't underſtand you.

Bev. Miſs Juliet, the niece.

Sir Pet. O fie! what chance have I there? Indeed if Lady Pepperpot ſhould happen to pop off—

Bev. I don't know that. You are, Sir Peter, a dangerous man; and were I a father or uncle, I ſhould not be a little ſhy of your viſits.

Sir

Sir Pet. Pſha! dear Bever, you banter.

Bev. And (unleſs I am extremely out in my gueſs), that lady—

Sir Pet. Hey! what, what, dear Bever?

Bev. But if you ſhould betray me—

Sir Pet. May I never eat a bit of green fat, if I do.

Bev. Hints have been dropp'd.

Sir Pet. The devil! Come a little this way.

Bev. Well-made: not robuſt and gigantic, 'tis true; but extremely genteel.

Sir Pet. Indeed!

Bev. Features, not entirely regular; but marking, with an air now, ſuperior; greatly above the—you underſtand me?

Sir Pet. Perfectly. Something noble; expreſſive of—faſhion.

Bev. Right.

Sir Pet. Yes, I have been frequently told ſo.

Bev. Not an abſolute wit; but ſomething infinitely better: an *enjouement*, a ſpirit, a ——

Sir Pet. Gaiety. I was ever ſo from a child.

Bev. In ſhort, your dreſs, addreſs, with a thouſand other particulars that at preſent I can't recollect.

Sir Pet. Why, dear Bever, to tell thee the truth, I have always admir'd Miſs Juliet, and a delicate creature ſhe is: ſweet as a ſugarcane, ſtraight as a bamboo, and her teeth as white as a negro's.

Bev. Poetic, but true. Now only conceive, Sir Peter, ſuch a plantation of perfections to be devoured by that caterpillar, Ruſt.

Sir Pet. A liquoriſh grub! Are pine-apples for ſuch muckworms as he? I'll ſend him a jar of citrons and ginger, and poiſon the pipkin.

Bev. No, no.

Sir Pet. Or invite him to dinner, and mix rat's-bane along with his curry.

Bev. Not ſo precipitate; I think we may defeat him without any danger.

Sir Pet. How, how?

Bev. I have a thought——but we muſt ſettle the plan with the lady. Could not you give her the hint that I ſhould be glad to ſee her a moment.

Sir Pet. I'll do it directly.

Bev. But don't let Sir Thomas perceive you.

Sir Pet. Never fear. You'll follow?

Bev. The inſtant I have ſettled matters with her; but fix the old fellow ſo that ſhe may not be miſs'd.

Sir Pet. I'll nail him, I warrant; I have his opinion to beg on this manuſcript.

Bev. Your own?

Sir Pet. No.

Bev. Oh ho! what, ſomething new from the Doctor, your chaplain?

Sir Pet. He! no, no. O Lord, he's elop'd.

Bev. How!

Sir Pet. Gone. You know he was to dedicate his volume of fables to me: ſo I gave him thirty pounds to get my arms engrav'd, to prefix (by way of print) to the frontiſpiece; and, O grief of griefs! the Doctor has mov'd off with the money. I'll ſend you Miſs Juliet.

[*Exit.*

Bev. There, now, is a ſpecial protector! the arts, I think, can't but flouriſh under ſuch a Mæcenas.

Youn. Heaven viſits with a taſte the wealthy fool:

Bev. True; but then, to juſtify the diſpenſation,

From hence the poor are cloath'd, the hungry fed;
Fortunes to bookſellers, to authors bread.

Youn. The diſtribution is, I own, a little unequal: And here comes a melancholy inſtance; poor Dick Dactyl, and his publiſher Puff.

Enter Dactyl *and* Puff.

Puff. Why, then, Mr Dactyl, carry them to ſomebody elſe; there are people enough in the trade. But I wonder you would meddle with poetry; you know it rarely pays for the paper.

Dac. And how can one help it, Mr Puff? genius impels; and when a man is once liſted in the ſervice of the muſes——

Puff. Why, let him give them warning as ſoon as he can. A pretty ſort of ſervice indeed, where there are neither wages nor vails! The muſes! And what, I ſuppoſe this is the livery they give? Gadzocks, I had rather be a waiter at Ranelagh.

Bev.

Bev. The poet and publiſher at variance! What is the matter, Mr Dactyl?

Dac. As Gad ſhall judge me, Mr Bever, as pretty a poem, and ſo polite; not a mortal can take any offence; all full of panegyric and praiſe.

Puff. A fine character he gives of his works. No offence! the greateſt in the world, Mr Dactyl. Panegyric and praiſe! and what will that do with the public? why; who the devil will give money to be told, that Mr Such-a-one is a wiſer or better man than himſelf? No, no; 'tis quite and clean out of nature. A good ſouſing ſatire now, well powdered with perſonal pepper, and ſeaſoned with the ſpirit of party; that demoliſhes a conſpicuous character, and ſinks him below our own level; there, there, we are pleaſed; there we chuckle and grin, and toſs the half-crowns on the counter.

Dac. Yes, and ſo get cropp'd for a libel.

Puff. Cropp'd! ay; and the luckieſt thing that can happen to you. Why, I would not give two-pence for an author that is afraid of his ears. Writing, writing is, (as I may ſay), Mr Dactyl, a ſort of warfare, where none can be victor that is the leaſt afraid of a ſcar. Why, zooks, Sir, I never got ſalt to my porridge till I mounted at the royal exchange.

Bev. Indeed!

Puff. No, no; that was the making of me. Then my name made a noiſe in the world. Talk of forked hills, and of Helicon! romantic and fabulous ſtuff. The true Caſtalian ſtream is a ſhower of eggs, and a pillory the poet's Parnaſſus.

Dac. Ay, to you, indeed, it may anſwer; but what do we get for our pains?

Puff. Why, what the deuce would you get? food, fire, and fame. Why, you would not grow fat! a corpulent poet is a monſter, a prodigy! No, no: ſpare diet is a ſpur to the fancy; high feeding would but founder your Pegaſus.

Dac. Why, you impudent, illiterate raſcal! who is it you dare treat in this manner?

Puff. Heyday! what is the matter now?

Dac. And is this the return for all the obligations

you owe me? But no matter; the world, the world ſhall know what you are, and how you have us'd me.

Puff. Do your worſt; I deſpiſe you.

Dac. They ſhall be told from what a dunghill you ſprang. Gentlemen, if there be faith in a ſinner, that fellow owes every ſhilling to me.

Puff. To thee!

Dac. Ay, ſirrah, to me. In what kind of way did I find you; then where and what was your ſtate? Gentlemen, his ſhop was a ſhed in Moorfields; his kitchen, a broken pipkin of charcoal; and his bed-chamber, under the counter.

Puff. I never was fond of expence; I ever minded my trade.

Dac. Your trade! and pray with what ſtock did you trade? I can give you the catalogue; I believe it won't overburden my memory. Two odd volumes of Swift; the Life of Moll Flanders, with cuts; the Five Senſes, printed and coloured by Overton; a few claſſics, thumb'd and blotted by the boys of the Charter-houſe; with the trial of Dr Sacheverel.

Puff. Malice.

Dac. Then, ſirrah, I gave you my Canning; it was ſhe firſt ſet you afloat.

Puff. A grub.

Dac. And it is not only my writings: you know, ſirrah, what you owe to my phyſic.

Bev. How! a phyſician?

Dac. Yes, Mr Bever; phyſic and poetry. Apollo is the patron of both: *Opiferque per orbem dicor.*

Puff. His phyſic!

Dac. My phyſic! ay, my phyſic. Why, dare you deny it, you raſcal! What, have you forgot my powders for flatulent crudities?

Puff. No.

Dac. My coſmetic lozenge and ſugar-plumbs?

Puff. No.

Dac. My coral for cutting of teeth, my potions, my lotions, my pregnancy-drops, with my paſte for ſuperfluous hairs?

Puff. No, no; have you done?

Dac.

Dac. No, no, no; but I believe this will ſuffice for the preſent.

Puff. Now, would not any mortal believe that I ow'd my all to this fellow?

Bev. Why, indeed, Mr Puff, the balance does ſeem in his favour.

Puff. In his favour! why you don't give any credit to him? a reptile, a bug, that owes his very being to me.

Dac. I, I, I!

Puff. You, you! What, I ſuppoſe you forget your garret in Wine-office-court, when you furniſh'd paragraphs for the Farthing-poſt at twelvepence a dozen.

Dac. Fiction.

Puff. Then did not I get you made collector of caſualties to the Whitehall and St James's? but that poſt your lazineſs loſt you. Gentlemen, he never brought them a robbery till the highwayman was going to be hang'd; a birth, till the chriſtening was over; nor a death, till the hatchment was up.

Dac. Mighty well!

Puff. And now, becauſe the fellow has got a little in fleſh, by being puff to the play-houſe this winter, (to which, by-the-bye, I got him appointed), he is as proud and as vain as Voltaire. But I ſhall ſoon have him under; the vacation will come.

Dac. Let it.

Puff. Then I ſhall have him ſneaking and cringing, hanging about me, and begging a bit of tranſlation.

Dac. I beg, I, for tranſlation!

Puff. No, no, not a line; not if you would do it for two-pence a-ſheet. No boil'd beef and carrot at mornings; no more cold pudding and porter. You may take your leave of my ſhop.

Dac. Your ſhop! then at parting I will leave you a legacy.

Bev. O fie, Mr Dactyl!

Puff. Let him alone.

Dac. Pray, gentlemen, let me do myſelf juſtice.

Bev. Younger, reſtrain the Publiſher's fire.

Youn. Fie, gentlemen, ſuch an illiberal combat: it is a ſcandal to the republic of letters.

Bev.

Bev. Mr Dactyl, an old man, a mechanic, beneath—

Dac. Sir, I am calm; that thought has reſtor'd me. To your inſignificancy you are indebted for ſafety. But what my generoſity has ſaved, my pen ſhall deſtroy.

Puff. Then you muſt get ſomebody to mend it.

Dac. Adieu!

Puff. Farewell! [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

Bev. Ha, ha, ha! come, let us along to the ſquire.

Blockheads with reaſon wicked wits abhor;
But dunce with dunce is barb'rous civil war.

ACT II.

Enter BEVER *and* YOUNGER.

YOUNGER.

POOR Dactyl! and dwells ſuch mighty rage in little men? I hope there is no danger of bloodſhed.

Bev. Oh, not in the leaſt: the *gens vatum*, the nation of poets, though an irritable, are yet a placable people. Their mutual intereſts will ſoon bring them together again.

Youn. But ſhall not we be late? The critical ſenate is by this time aſſembled.

Bev. I warrant you, frequent and full; where

Stately Bufo, puff'd by ev'ry quill,
Sits like Apollo, on his forked hill.

But you know I muſt wait for Miſs Lofty; I am now totally directed by her; ſhe gives me the key to all Sir Thomas's foibles, and preſcribes the moſt proper method to feed them; but what good purpoſe that will produce——

Youn. Is ſhe clever, adroit?

Bev. Doubtleſs. I like your aſking the queſtion of me.

Youn. Then pay an implicit obedience: the ladies, in theſe caſes, generally know what they are about. The door opens.

Bev. It is Juliet, and with her old Ruſt. Enter, Frank: you know the knight, ſo no introduction is wanted. [*Exit* Younger.] I ſhould be glad to hear this reverend piece of lumber make love; the courtſhip muſt

cer-

certainly be curious. Good manners, ſtand by; by your leave I will liſten a little. [Bever *retires.*

Enter Juliet *and* Ruſt.

Jul. And your collection is large?

Ruſt. Moſt curious and capital. When, Madam, will you give me leave to add your charms to the catalogue?

Jul. O dear! Mr Ruſt, I ſhall but diſgrace it. Beſides, Sir, when I marry, I am reſolved to have my huſband all to myſelf: now for the poſſeſſion of your heart I ſhall have too many competitors.

Ruſt. How, Madam? were Prometheus alive, and would animate the Helen that ſtands in my hall, ſhe ſhould not coſt me a ſigh.

Jul. Ay, Sir, there lies my greateſt misfortune. Had I only thoſe who are alive to contend with, by aſſiduity, affection, cares, and careſſes, I might ſecure my conquest; though that would be difficult; for I am convinc'd, were you, Mr Ruſt, put up by Preſtage to auction, the Apollo Belvidere would not draw a greater number of bidders.

Ruſt. Would that were the caſe, Madam, ſo I might be thought a proper companion to the Venus de Medicis.

Jul. The flower of rhetoric, and pink of politeneſs. But my fears are not confined to the living; for every nation and age, even painters and ſtatuaries, conſpire againſt me. Nay, when the pantheon itſelf, the very goddeſſes, riſe up as my rivals, what chance has a mortal like me?—— I ſhall certainly laugh in his face. [*Aſide.*

Ruſt. She is a delicate ſubject.—Goddeſſes, Madam! zooks, had you been on Mount Ida when Paris decided the conteſt, the Cyprian queen had pleaded for the pippin in vain.

Jul. Extravagant gallantry.

Ruſt. In you, Madam, are concenter'd all the beauties of the heathen mythology: the open front of Diana, the luſtre of Pallas's eyes——

Jul. Oh, Sir!

Ruſt. The chromatic muſic of Clio, the blooming graces of Hebe, the imperial port of queen Juno, with the delicate dimples of Venus.

Jul. I ſee, Sir, antiquity has not engroſs'd all your at-

attention: You are no novice in the nature of woman Incenſe, I own, is grateful to moſt of my ſex; but there are times when adoration may be diſpens'd with.

Ruſt. Ma'am!

Jul. I ſay, Sir, when we women willingly wave our rank in the ſkies, and wiſh to be treated as mortals.

Ruſt. Doubtleſs, Madam: and are you wanting in materials for that? No, Madam; as in dignity you ſurpaſs the heathen divinities, ſo in the charms of attraction you beggar the queens of the earth. The whole world, at different periods, has contributed its ſeveral beauties to form you.

Jul. The deuce it has! [*Aſide.*

Ruſt. See there the ripe Aſiatic perfection, join'd to the delicate ſoftneſs of Europe. In you, Madam, I burn to poſſeſs Cleopatra's alluring glances, the Greek profile of queen Clytemneſtra, the Roman noſe of the empreſs Popæa.

Jul. With the majeſtic march of queen Beſs. Mercy on me, what a wonderful creature am I!

Ruſt. In ſhort, Madam, not a feature you have, but recalls to my mind ſome trait in a medal or buſt.

Jul. Indeed! Why, by your account, I muſt be an abſolute olio, a perfect ſalamongundy of charms.

Ruſt. Oh, Madam, how can you demean, as I may ſay, undervalue—

Jul. Value! there is the thing; and to tell you the truth, Mr Ruſt, in that word value lies my greateſt objection.

Ruſt. I don't underſtand you.

Jul. Why then I'll explain myſelf. It has been ſaid, and I believe with ſome ſhadow of truth, that no man is a hero to his valet de chambre; now I am afraid, when you and I grow a little more intimate, which I ſuppoſe muſt be the caſe if you proceed on your plan, you will be horribly diſappointed in your high expectations, and ſoon diſcover this Juno, this Cleopatra, and princeſs Popæa, to be as arrant a mortal as madam your mother.

Ruſt. Madam, I, I, I—

Jul. Your patience a moment. Being therefore deſirous to preſerve your devotion, I beg, for the future, you would pleaſe to adore at a diſtance.

Ruſt.

Ruſt. To Endymion, Madam, Luna once liſtened.

Jul. Ay, but he was another kind of a mortal; you may do very well as a votary, but for a huſband—mercy upon me!

Ruſt. Madam, you are not in earneſt, not ſerious?

Jul. Not ſerious! Why, have you the impudence to think of marrying a goddeſs?

Ruſt. I ſhould hope—

Jul. And what ſhould you hope? I find your devotion reſembles that of the world: when the power of ſinning is over, and the ſprightly firſt-runnings of life are rack'd off, you offer the vapid dregs to your deity. No, no; you may, if you pleaſe, turn monk in my ſervice. One vow, I believe, you will obſerve better than moſt of them, chaſtity.

Ruſt. Permit me—

Jul. Or if you muſt marry, take your Julia, your Portia, or Flora, your Fum-fam from China, or your Egyptian Oſiris. You have long paid your addreſſes to them.

Ruſt. Marry! what, marble?

Jul. The propereſt wives in the world; you can't chooſe amiſs; they will ſupply you with all that you want.

Ruſt. Your uncle has, Madam, conſented.

Jul. That is more than ever his niece will. Conſented! and to what? to be ſwath'd to a mould'ring mummy; or be lock'd up like your medals, to canker and ruſt in a cabinet! No, no; I was made for the world, and the world ſhall not be robb'd of its right.

Bev. Bravo, Juliet! gad, ſhe's a fine ſpirited girl.

Jul. My *profile*, indeed! No, Sir; when I marry, I muſt have a man that will meet me full face.

Ruſt. Might I be heard for a moment?

Jul. To what end? You ſay you have Sir Thomas Lofty's conſent; I tell you, you can never have mine. You may ſcreen me from or expoſe me to my uncle's reſentment; the choice is your own: if you lay the fault at my door, you will, doubtleſs, greatly diſtreſs me; but take the blame on yourſelf, and I ſhall own myſelf extremely oblig'd to you.

Ruſt. How! confeſs myſelf in the fault?

Jul. Ay; for the beſt thing a man can do, when he finds

finds he can't be belov'd, is to take care he is not heartily hated. There is no other alternative.

Ruſt. Madam, I ſha'n't break my word with Sir Thomas.

Jul. Nor I with myſelf. So there's an end of our conference. Sir, your very obedient.

Ruſt. Madam, I, I, don't—that is, let me—But no matter. Your ſervant. [*Exit.*

Jul. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter Bever *from behind.*

Bev. Ha, ha, ha! Incomparable Juliet? How the old old dotard trembled and totter'd! he could not have been more inflam'd had he been robb'd of his Otho.

Jul. Ay; was ever goddeſs ſo familiarly us'd? In my conſcience, I began to be afraid that he would treat me as the Indians do their dirty divinities; whenever they are deaf to their prayers, they beat and abuſe them.

Bev. But after all, we are in an aukward ſituation.

Jul. How ſo?

Bev. I have my fears.

Jul. So have not I.

Bev. Your uncle has reſolv'd that you ſhould be marry'd to Ruſt.

Jul. Ay, he may decree; but it is I that muſt execute.

Bev. But ſuppoſe he has given his word?

Jul. Why then let him recal it again.

Bev. But are you ſure you ſhall have courage enough—

Jul. To ſay *no?* That requires much reſolution, indeed.

Bev. Then I am at the height of my hopes.

Jul. Your hopes! Your hopes and your fears are ill-founded alike.

Bev. Why, you are determined not to be his.

Jul. Well, and what then?

Bev. What then? why, then you will be mine.

Jul. Indeed! and is that the natural conſequence; whoever won't be his muſt be your's? Is that the logic of Oxford?

Bev. Madam, I did flatter myſelf—

Jul. Then you did very wrong, indeed, Mr Bever: you

you ſhould ever guard againſt flattering yourſelf; for of all dangerous parafites, Self is the worſt.

Bev. I am aſtoniſh'd!

Jul. Aſtoniſh'd! you are mad, I believe! Why, I have not known you a month. It is true, my uncle ſays your father is his friend; your fortune, in time, will be eaſy; your figure is not remarkably faulty; and as to your underſtanding, paſſable enough for a young fellow who has not ſeen much of the world: but when one talks of a huſband—Lord, 'tis quite another ſort of a——Ha, ha, ha! Poor Bever, how he ſtares! he ſtands like a ſtatue!

Bev. Statue! Indeed, Madam, I am very near petrified.

Jul. Even then, you will make as good a huſband as Ruſt. But go, run, and join the aſſembly within: be attentive to every word, motion, and look of my uncle's; be dumb when he ſpeaks, admire all he ſays, laugh when he ſmirks, bow when he ſneezes; in ſhort, fawn, flatter, and cringe: don't be afraid of overloading his ſtomach; for the knight has a noble digeſtion, and you will find ſome there who will keep you in countenance.

Bev. I fly. So then, Juliet, your intention was only to try—

Jul. Don't plague me with impertinent queſtions; march; obey my directions. We muſt leave the iſſue to chance; a greater friend to mankind than they are willing to own. Oh, if any thing new ſhould occur, you may come into the drawing-room for further inſtructions.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE, *a Room in* Sir Thomas Lofty's *houſe.*

Sir Thomas, Ruſt, Puff, Dactyl, *and others, diſcovered ſitting.*

Sir Tho. Nothing new to-day from Parnaſſus?

Dac. Not that I hear.

Sir Tho. Nothing critical, philoſophical, or political?

Puff. Nothing.

Sir Tho. Then in this diſette, this dearth of invention, give me leave, gentlemen, to diſtribute my ſtores. I have here in my hand a little ſmart, ſatyrical epigram; new, and prettily pointed: in ſhort, a production that Martial himſelf would not have bluſh'd to acknowledge.

Ruſt. Your own, Sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. O fie! no; ſent me this morning, anonymous.

Dac. Pray, Sir Thomas, let us have it.

All. By all means; by all means.

Sir Tho. To Phillis.

Think'ſt thou, fond Phillis, Strephon told thee true,
Angels are painted fair, to look like you:
Another ſtory all the town will tell;
Phillis paints fair—to look like an an-gel.

All. Fine! fine! very fine!

Dac. Such an eaſe and ſimplicity!

Puff. The turn ſo unexpected and quick!

Ruſt. The ſatyr ſo poignant!

Sir Tho. Yes; I think it poſſeſſes, in an eminent degree, the three great epigrammatical requiſites; brevity, familiarity, and ſeverity.

Phillis paints fair—to look like an-gel.

Dac. Happy! Is the Phillis, the ſubject, a ſecret?

Sir Tho. Oh, dear me! nothing perſonal; no: an impromptu; a mere *jeu d'eſprit.*

Puff. Then, Sir Thomas, the ſecret is out; it is your own.

Dac. That was obvious enough.

Puff. Who is there elſe could have wrote it?

Ruſt. True, true.

Sir Tho. The name of the author is needleſs. So it is an acquiſition to the republic of letters, any gentleman may claim the merit that will.

Puff. What a noble contempt!

Dac. What greatneſs of mind!

Ruſt. Scipio and Lælius were the Roman Loftys. Why, I dare believe Sir Thomas has been the making of half the authors in town: he is, as I may ſay, the great manufacturer; the other poets are but pedlars, that live by retailing his wares.

All. Ha, ha, ha! well obſerv'd, Mr Ruſt.

'*Sir Tho.* Ha, ha, ha! *Molle atque facetum.* Why, 'to purſue the metaphor, if Sir Thomas Lofty was to 'call in his poetical debts, I believe there would be a 'good many bankrupts in the Muſe's Gazette.

'*All.* Ha, ha, ha!

'*Sir Tho.* But, a-propos, gentlemen; with regard to 'the eclipſe: you found my calculation exact?

'*Dac.*

'*Dac.* To a digit.

'*Sir Tho.* Total darkneſs, indeed! and birds going to 'rooſt! Thoſe philomaths, thoſe almanack-makers, are 'the moſt ignorant raſcals—

'*Puff.* It is amazing where Sir Thomas Lofty ſtores 'all his knowledge.

'*Dac.* It is wonderful how the mind of man can con-'tain it.

'*Sir Tho.* Why, to tell you the truth, that circum-'ſtance has a good deal engag'd my attention; and I 'believe you will admit my method of ſolving the phe-'nomenon philoſophical and ingenious enough.

'*Puff.* Without queſtion.

'*All.* Doubtleſs.

'*Sir Tho.* I ſuppoſe, gentlemen, my memory, or mind, 'to be a cheſt of drawers, a kind of bureau; where, in 'ſeparate cellules, my different knowledge on different 'ſubjects is ſtor'd.

'*Ruſt.* A prodigious diſcovery!

'*All.* Amazing!

Sir Tho. To this cabinet, volition, or will, has a key; 'ſo when an arduous ſubject occurs, I unlock my bureau, 'pull out the particular drawer, and am ſupplied with 'what I want in an inſtant.

'*Dac.* A Malbranch!

'*Puff.* A Boyle!

'*All.* A Locke!

Enter Servant.

Ser. Mr Bever. [*Exit.*

Sir Tho. A young gentleman from Oxford, recommended to my care by his father. The univerſity has given him a good ſolid Doric foundation; and when he has receiv'd from you a few Tuſcan touches, the Ionic and Corinthian graces, I make no doubt but he will prove a Compoſite pillar to the republic of letters. [*Enter* Bever.] This, Sir, is the ſchool from whence ſo many capital maſters have iſſued; the river that enriches the regions of ſcience.

Dac. Of which river, Sir Thomas, you are the ſource; here we quaff: *Et purpureo bibimus ore nectar.*

Sir Tho. Purpureo! Delicate, indeed, Mr Dactyl! Do you hear, Mr Bever? *Bibimus ore nectar.* You, young

gentleman, must be instructed to quote; nothing gives a period more spirit than a happy quotation, nor has indeed a finer effect at the head of an essay. Poor Dick Steel! I have oblig'd him with many a motto for his fugitive pieces.

Puff. Ay; and with the contents too, or Sir Richard is foully bely'd.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir Roger Dowlas.

Sir Tho. Pray desire him to enter. [*Exit* Servant.] Sir Roger, gentlemen, is a considerable East-India proprietor; and seems desirous of collecting from this learned assembly some rhetorical flowers, which he hopes to strew with honour to himself and advantage to the company, at Merchant-Taylors Hall. [*Enter* Sir Roger Dowlas.] Sir Roger, be seated. This gentleman has, in common with the greatest orator the world ever saw, a small natural infirmity; he stutters a little: but I have prescrib'd the same remedy that Demosthenes used, and don't despair of a radical cure. Well, Sir, have you digested those general rules?

Sir Rog. Pr—ett—y well, I am obli—g'd to you, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Have you been regular in taking your tincture of sage, to give you confidence for speaking in public?

Sir Rog. Y—es, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Did you open at the last general court?

Sir Rog. I attem—p—ted fo—ur or fi—ve times.

Sir Tho. What hinder'd your progress?

Sir Rog. The pe—b—bles.

Sir Tho. Oh, the pebbles in his mouth. But they are only put in to practise in private; you should take them out when you are addressing the public.

Sir Rog. Yes; I will for the fu—ture.

Sir Tho. Well, Mr Ruft, you had a tete-a-tete with my niece. A-propos, Mr Bever, here offers a fine occasion for you; we shall take the liberty to trouble your Muse on their nuptials: O Love! O Hymen! here prune thy purple wings; trim thy bright torch. Hey, Mr Bever?

Bev. My talents are at Sir Thomas Lofty's direction; tho' I must despair of producing any performance worthy

thy the attention of ſo complete a judge of the elegant arts.

Sir Tho. Too modeſt, good Mr Bever. Well, Mr Ruſt, any new acquiſition, ſince our laſt meeting, to your matchleſs collection?

Ruſt. Why, Sir Thomas, I have both loſt and gain'd ſince I ſaw you.

Sir Tho. Loſt! I am ſorry for that.

Ruſt. The curious ſarcophagus, that was ſent me from Naples by Signor Belloni—

Sir Tho. You mean the urn that was ſuppoſed to contain the duſt of Agrippa?

Ruſt. Suppoſed! no doubt but it did.

Sir Tho. I hope no ſiniſter accident to that ineſtimable relic of Rome?

Ruſt. 'Tis gone.

Sir Tho. Gone! oh, illiberal! what, ſtolen I ſuppoſe by ſome connoiſſeur?

Ruſt. Worſe, worſe! a prey, a martyr to ignorance: a houſemaid that I hir'd laſt week miſtook it for a broken green chamber-pot, and ſent it away in the duſt-cart.

Sir Tho. She merits impaling. Oh, the Hun!

Dac. The Vandal!

All. The Viſigoth!

Ruſt. But I have this day acquir'd a treaſure that will in ſome meaſure make me amends.

Sir Tho. Indeed! what can that be?

Puff. That muſt be ſomething curious, indeed.

Ruſt. It has coſt me infinite trouble to get it.

Dac. Great rarities are not to be had without pains.

Ruſt. It is three months ago ſince I got the firſt ſcent of it; and I had been ever ſince on the hunt, but all to no purpoſe.

Sir Tho. I am quite upon thorns till I ſee it.

Ruſt. And yeſterday, when I had given it over, when all my hopes were grown deſperate, it fell into my hands by the moſt unexpected and wonderful accident.

Sir Tho. *Quod optanti divum promittere nemo*
Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro.
Mr Bever, you remark my quotation?

Bev. Moſt happy. Oh, Sir, nothing you ſay can be loſt.

Ruſt. I have brought it here in my pocket; I am no churl; I love to pleaſure my friends.

Sir Tho. You are, Mr Ruſt, extremely obliging.

All. Very kind, very obliging indeed.

Ruſt. It was not much hurt by the fire.

Sir Tho. Very fortunate.

Ruſt. The edges are ſoil'd by the link, but many of the letters are exceedingly legible.

Sir Rog. A li—ttle roo—m, if you p—leaſe.

Ruſt. Here it is; the precious remains of the very North-Briton that was burnt at the Royal-Exchange.

Sir Tho. Number Forty-five?

Ruſt The ſame.

Bev. You are a lucky man, Mr Ruſt.

Ruſt. I think ſo. But, gentlemen, I hope I need not give you a caution; huſh—-ſilence—-no words on this matter.

Dac. You may depend upon us.

Ruſt. For as the paper has not ſuffer'd the law, I don't know whether they may not ſeize it again.

Sir Tho. With us you are ſafe, Mr Ruſt. Well, young gentleman, you ſee we cultivate all branches of ſcience.

Bev. Amazing, indeed! But when we conſider you, Sir Thomas, as the directing, the ruling planet, our wonder ſubſides in an inſtant. Science firſt ſaw the day with Socrates in the Attic portico; her early years were ſpent with Tully in the Tuſculan ſhade; but her ripe, maturer hours, ſhe enjoys with Sir Thomas Lofty near Cavendiſh-ſquare.

Sir Tho. The moſt claſſical compliment I ever receiv'd! Gentlemen, a philoſophical repaſt attends your acceptance within. Sir Roger, you'll lead the way. [*Exeunt all but* Sir Thomas *and* Bever.] Mr Bever, may I beg your ear for a moment? Mr Bever, the friendſhip I have for your father, ſecured you, at firſt, a gracious reception from me; but what I then paid to an old obligation, is now, Sir, due to your own particular merit.

Bev. I am happy, Sir Thomas, if—

Sir Tho. Your patience. There is in you, Mr Bever, a fire of imagination, a quickneſs of apprehenſion, a ſolidity

lidity of judgment, join'd to a depth of diſcretion, that I never yet met with in any ſubject at your time of life.

Bev. I hope I ſhall never forfeit—

Sir Tho. I am ſure you never will; and to give you a convincing proof that I think ſo, I am now going to truſt you with the moſt important ſecret of my whole life.

Bev. Your confidence does me great honour.

Sir Tho. But this muſt be on a certain condition.

Bev. Name it.

Sir Tho. That you give me your ſolemn promiſe to comply with one requeſt I ſhall make you.

Bev. There is nothing Sir Thomas Lofty can aſk that I ſhall not cheerfully grant.

Sir Tho. Nay, in fact, it will be ſerving yourſelf.

Bev. I want no ſuch inducement.

Sir Tho. Enough. But we can't be too private. [*Shuts the door.*] Sit you down. Your Chriſtian name, I think, is—

Bev. Richard.

Sir Tho. True; the ſame as your father's: come, let us be familiar. It is, I think, dear Dick, acknowledg'd, that the Engliſh have reach'd the higheſt pitch of perfection in every department of writing but one—the dramatic.

Bev. Why, the French critics are a little ſevere.

Sir Tho. And with reaſon. Now, to reſcue our credit, and at the ſame time give my country a model, [*ſhows a manuſcript,*] ſee here.

Bev. A play?

Sir Tho. A *chef d'œuvre.*

Bev. Your own?

Sir Tho. Speak lower. I am the author.

Bev. Nay, then there can be no doubt of its merit.

Sir Tho. I think, not. You will be charm'd with the ſubject.

Bev. What is it, Sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. I ſhall ſurpriſe you. The ſtory of Robinſon Cruſoe. Are not you ſtruck?

Bev. Moſt prodigiouſly!

Sir Tho. Yes; I knew the very title would hit you. You will find the whole fable is finely conducted; and

the

the character of Friday, *qualis ab incepto*, nobly supported throughout.

Bev. A pretty difficult task.

Sir Tho. True; that was not a bow for a boy. The piece has long been in rehearsal at Drury-Lane playhouse, and this night is to make its appearance.

Bev. To-night?

Sir Tho. This night.

Bev. I will attend, and engage all my friends to support it.

Sir Tho. That is not my purpose; the piece will want no such assistance.

Bev. I beg pardon.

Sir Tho. The manager of that house, (who, you know, is a writer himself), finding all the anonymous things he produc'd (indeed some of them wretched enough, and very unworthy of him) plac'd to his account by the public, is determin'd to exhibit no more without knowing the name of the author.

Bev. A reasonable caution.

Sir Tho. Now, upon my promise (for I appear to patronize the play) to announce the author before the curtain draws up, Robinson Crusoe is advertis'd for this evening.

Bev. Oh, then you will acknowledge the piece to be your's.

Sir Tho. No.

Bev. How then?

Sir Tho. My design is to give it to you.

Bev. To me!

Sir Tho. To you.

Bev. What, me the author of Robinson Crusoe?

Sir Tho. Ay.

Bev. Lord, Sir Thomas, it will never gain credit: so complete a production the work of a stripling! Besides, Sir, as the merit is your's, why rob yourself of the glory?

Sir Tho. I am entirely indifferent to that.

Bev. Then why take the trouble?

Sir Tho. My fondness for letters, and love of my country. Besides, dear Dick, though the *pauci & selecti*, the chosen few, know the full value of a performance like this,

his, yet the ignorant, the profane (by much the majority) will be apt to think it an occupation ill suited to any time of life,

Bev. Their censure is praise.

Sir Tho. Doubtless. But indeed my principal motive is my friendship for you. You are now a candidate for literary honours, and I am determin'd to fix your fame on an immoveable basis.

Bev. You are most excessively kind; but there is something so disingenuous in stealing reputation from another man.

Sir Tho. Idle punctilio!

Bev. It puts me so in mind of the daw in the fable.

Sir Tho. Come, come, dear Dick, I won't suffer your modesty to murder your fame. But the company will suspect something; we will join them, and proclaim you the author. There, keep the copy; to you I consign it for ever; it shall be a secret to latest posterity. You will be smother'd with praise by our friends; they shall all in their bark to the playhouse; and there,

Attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter BEVER, *reading.*

SO ends the first act. Come, now for the second. "Act the second, showing,"—the coxcomb has prefac'd every act with an argument too, in humble imitation, I warrant, of Monsr. Diderot—"Showing the fatal effects of disobedience to parents:" with, I suppose, the diverting scene of a gibbet; an entertaining subject for comedy. And the blockhead is as prolix; every scene as long as a homily. Let's see; how does this end? "Exit Crusoe, and enter some savages dancing a sara-"band." There's no bearing this abominable trash. [*Enter* Juliet.] So, Madam; thanks to your advice and direction, I am got into a fine situation.

Jul. What is the matter now, Mr Bever?

Bev. The Robinson Crusoe.

Jul. Oh, the play that is to be acted to-night. How

secret

fecret you were! Who in the world would have gueſs you was the author?

Bev. Me, Madam!

Jul. Your title is odd; but to a genius every ſubje is good.

Bev. You are inclin'd to be pleaſant.

Jul. Within they have been all prodigious loud in th praiſe of your piece; but I think my uncle rather mo eager than any.

Bev. He has reaſon; for fatherly fondneſs goes far.

Jul. I don't underſtand you.

Bev. You don't!

Jul. No.

Bev. Nay, Juliet, this is too much; you know it none of my play.

Jul. Whoſe then?

Bev. Your uncle's.

Jul. My uncle's! Then how, in the name of wonde came you to adopt it?

Bev. At his earneſt requeſt. I may be a fool; but re member, Madam, you are the cauſe.

Jul. This is ſtrange; but I can't conceive what hi motive could be.

Bev. His motive is obvious enough; to ſcreen him ſelf from the infamy of being the author.

Jul. What, is it bad, then?

Bev. Bad! moſt infernal!

Jul. And you have conſented to own it?

Bev. Why, what could I do? He in a manner com pell'd me.

Jul. I am extremely glad of it.

Bev. Glad of it! Why, I tell you 'tis the moſt dull tedious, melancholy—

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. The moſt flat piece of ſtippery that ever Grub ſtreet produc'd.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. It will be damn'd before the third act.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. And I ſhall be hooted and pointed at wherever I go.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. So much the better! Zounds! ſo, I ſuppoſe, you ould ſay if I was going to be hang'd. Do you call this mark of your friendſhip?

Jul. Ah, Bever, Bever! you are a miſerable politician: do you know, now, that this is the luckieſt incident that ever occurred?

Bev. Indeed!

Jul. It could not have been better laid, had we plann'd ourſelves.

Bev. You will pardon my want of conception; but heſe are riddles.

Jul. That at preſent I have not time to explain. But vhat makes you loit'ring here? Paſt ſix o'clock, as I ive! Why, your play is begun; run, run to the houſe. Was ever author ſo little anxious for the fate of his piece!

Bev. My piece!

Jul. Sir Thomas! I know by his walk. Fly; and pray all the way for the fall of your play. And do you hear, if you find the audience too indulgent, inclin'd to be milky, rather than fail, ſqueeze in a little acid yourſelf. Oh, Mr Bever, at your return let me ſee you before you go to my uncle; that is, if you have the good luck to be damn'd.

Bev. You need not doubt that. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Thomas Lofty.

Sir Tho. So, Juliet; was not that Mr Bever?

Jul. Yes, Sir.

Sir Tho. He is rather tardy; by this time his cauſe is come on. And how is the young gentleman affected? for this is a trying occaſion.

Jul. He ſeems pretty certain, Sir.

Sir Tho. Indeed I think he has very little reaſon for fear. I confeſs I admire the piece, and feel as much for its fate as if the work was my own.

Jul. That I moſt ſincerely believe. I wonder, Sir, you did not chooſe to be preſent.

Sir Tho. Better not. My affections are ſtrong, Juliet, and my nerves but tenderly ſtrung; however, intelligent people are planted, who will bring me, every act, a faithful account of the proceſs.

Jul. That will anſwer your purpoſe as well.

Sir

Sir Tho. Indeed I am paſſionately fond of the art: and therefore can't help——Did not ſomebody knock No. My good girl, will you ſtep, and take care tha when any body comes, the ſervants may not be out o the way? [*Exit* Juliet.] Five-and-thirty minutes pa ſix; by this time the firſt act muſt be over: John will b preſently here. I think it can't fail; yet there is ſ much whim and caprice in the public opinion, that—— This young man is unknown; they'll give him no cre dit. I had better have own'd it myſelf: reputation goe a great way in theſe matters; people are afraid to fin fault; they are cautious in cenſuring the works of a ma who—Huſh! that's he: no; 'tis only the ſhutters. Af ter all, I think I have choſen the beſt way; for if it ſuc ceeds to the degree I expect, it will be eaſy to circulat the real name of the author; if it fails, I am conceal'd my fame ſuffers—no—There he is. [*Loud knocking.*] can't conceive what kept him ſo long. [*Enter* John.] So, John; well; and——but you have been a monſtrou while.

John. Sir, I was wedg'd ſo cloſe in the pit, that I coul ſcarcely get out.

Sir Tho. The houſe was full, then?

John. As an egg, Sir.

Sir Tho. That's right. Well, John, and did matter go ſwimmingly? Hey?

John Exceedingly well, Sir.

Sir Tho. Exceedingly well. I don't doubt it. What, vaſt clapping and roars of applauſe, I ſuppoſe.

John. Very well, Sir.

Sir Tho. Very well, Sir! You are damn'd coſtive, I think. But did not the pit and boxes thunder again?

John. I can't ſay there was over-much thunder.

Sir Tho. No! Oh, attentive, I reckon. Ay, atten tion; that is the true, ſolid, ſubſtantial applauſe. All elſe may be purchas'd; hands move as they are bid: but when the audience is huſh'd, ſtill, afraid of loſing a word, then—

John. Yes, they were very quiet, indeed, Sir.

Sir Tho. I like them the better, John; a ſtrong mark of their great ſenſibility. Did you ſee Robin?

John. Yes, Sir; he'll be here in a trice; I left him liſt'ning

liſt'ning at the back of the boxes, and charg'd him to make all the haſte home that he could.

Sir Tho. That's right, John; very well; your account pleaſes me much, honeſt John. [*Exit* John.] No, I did not expect the firſt act would produce any prodigious effect. And, after all, the firſt act is but a mere introduction; juſt opens the buſineſs, the plot, and gives a little inſight into the characters; ſo that if you but engage and intereſt the houſe, it is as much as the beſt writer can ſtatt—[*Knocking without.*] Gadſo! what, Robin already? why the fellow has the feet of a Mercury. [*Enter* Robin.] Well, Robin; and what news do you bring?

Rob. I, I, I—

Sir Tho. Stop, Robin, and recover your breath. Now, Robin.

Rob. There has been a woundy uproar below.

Sir Tho. An uproar! what, at the playhouſe?

Rob. Ay.

Sir Tho. At what?

Rob. I don't know: belike at the words the playfolk were talking.

Sir Tho. At the players! How can that be? Oh, now I begin to perceive. Poor fellow, he knows but little of plays: What, Robin, I ſuppoſe, hallooing, and clapping, and knocking of ſticks.

Rob. Hallooing! Ay, and hooting too.

Sir Tho. And hooting!

Rob. Ay, and hiſſing to boot.

Sir Tho. Hiſſing! you muſt be miſtaken.

Rob. By the maſs, but I am not.

Sir Tho. Impoſſible! Oh, moſt likely ſome drunken diſorderly fellows that were diſturbing the houſe, and interrupting the play; too common a caſe; the people were right, they deſerv'd a rebuke. Did not you hear them cry, Out, out, out!

Rob. Noa; that was not the cry; 'twas, Off, off, off!

Sir Tho. That was a whimſical noiſe. 'Zounds! that muſt be the players. Did you obſerve nothing elſe?

Rob. Belike the quarrel firſt began between the gentry and a black-a-moor man.

Sir Tho. With Friday! The public taſte is debauch'd; honeſt nature is too plain and ſimple for their vitiated

palates! [*Enter* Juliet.] Juliet, Robin brings me the ſtrangeſt account; ſome little diſturbance; but I ſuppoſe it was ſoon ſettled again. Oh, but here comes Mr Staytape my taylor; he is a rational being; we ſhall be able to make ſomething of him. [*Enter* Staytape.] So, Staytape; what, is the third act over already?

Stay. Over, Sir! no; nor never will be.

Sir Tho. What do you mean?

Stay. Cut ſhort.

Sir Tho. I don't comprehend you.

Stay. Why, Sir, the poet has made a miſtake in meaſuring the taſte of the town: the goods, it ſeems, did not fit; ſo they return'd them upon the gentleman's hands.

Sir Tho. Rot your affectation and quaintneſs, you puppy! ſpeak plain.

Stay. Why then, Sir, Robinſon Cruſoe is dead.

Sir Tho. Dead!

Stay. Aye; and what is worſe, will never riſe any more. You will ſoon have all the particulars; for there were four or five of your friends cloſe at my heels.

Sir Tho. Staytape, Juliet, run and ſtop them. Say I am gone out; I am ſick; I am engag'd: but whatever you do, be ſure you don't let Bever come in. Secure of the victory, I invited them to the celebr—

Stay. Sir, they are here.

Sir Tho. Confound—

Enter Puff, Dactyl, *and* Ruſt.

Ruſt. Aye, truly, Mr Puff, this is but a bitter beginning; then the young man muſt turn himſelf to ſome other trade.

Puff. Servant, Sir Thomas; I ſuppoſe you have heard the news of—

Sir Tho. Yes, yes; I have been told it before.

Dac. I confeſs, I did not ſuſpect it; but there is no knowing what effect theſe things will have till they come on the ſtage.

Ruſt. For my part, I don't know much of theſe matters; but a couple of gentlemen near me, who ſeem'd ſagacious enough too, declar'd, that it was the vileſt ſtuff they

they ever had heard, and wonder'd the players would act it.

Dac. Yes: I don't remember to have seen a more general dislike.

Puff. I was thinking to ask you, Sir Thomas, for your interest with Mr Bever, about buying the copy; but now no mortal would read it. Lord, Sir, it would not pay for paper and printing.

Rust. I remember, Kennet, in his Roman antiquities, mentions a play of Terence's, Mr Dactyl, that was terribly treated; but that he attributes to the peoples fondness for certain *funambuli*, or rope-dancers; but I have not lately heard of any famous tumblers in town: Sir Thomas, have you?

Sir Tho. How should I? do you suppose I trouble my head about tumblers?

Rust. Nay, I did not—

Bev. [*speaking without.*] Not to be spoke with! Don't tell me, Sir; he must, he shall.

Sir Tho. Mr Bever's voice. If he is admitted in his present disposition, the whole secret will certainly out. Gentlemen, some affairs of a most interesting nature makes it impossible for me to have the honour of your company to-night; therefore I beg you would be so good as to—

Rust. Affairs! no bad news? I hope Miss Julé is well.

Sir Tho. Very well; but I am most exceedingly—

Rust. I shall only just stay to see Mr Bever: poor lad! he will be most horribly down in the mouth; a little comfort won't come amiss.

Sir Tho. Mr Bever, Sir! you won't see him here.

Rust. Not here! why I thought I heard his voice but just now.

Sir Tho. You are mistaken, Mr Rust; but—

Rust. May be so; then we will go. Sir Thomas, my compliments of condolence, if you please, to the poet.

Sir Tho. Ay, Ay.

Dac. And mine; for I suppose we shan't see him soon.

Puff. Poor gentleman! I warrant he won't show his head for these six months.

Ruſt. Ay, ay: indeed I am very ſorry for him; ſo tell him, Sir.

Dac. and *Puff.* So are we.

Ruſt. Sir Thomas, your ſervant. Come, gentlemen. By all this confuſion in Sir Thomas, there muſt be ſomething more in the wind than I know; but I will watch, I am reſolv'd. [*Exeunt.*

Bev. [*without.*] Raſcals, ſtand by! I muſt, I will ſee him.

Enter Bever.

So, Sir; this is delicate treatment, after all I have ſuffer'd.

Sir Tho. Mr Bever, I hope you don't—that is——

Bev. Well, Sir Thomas Lofty, what think you now of your Robinſon Cruſoe? a pretty performance!

Sir Tho. Think, Mr Bever! I think the public are blockheads; a taſteleſs, ſtupid, ignorant tribe; and a man of genius deſerves to be damn'd who writes any thing for them. But courage, dear Dick; the principals will give you what the people refuſe; the cloſet will do you that juſtice the ſtage has deny'd: Print your play.

Bev. My play! Zounds, Sir, 'tis your own.

Sir Tho. Speak lower, dear Dick; be moderate, my good, dear lad!

Bev. Oh, Sir Thomas, you may be eaſy enough; you are ſafe and ſecure, remov'd far from that precipice that has daſh'd me to pieces.

Sir Tho. Dear Dick, don't believe it will hurt you: the critics, the real judges, will diſcover in that piece ſuch excellent talents—

Bev. No, Sir Thomas, no. I ſhall neither flatter you nor myſelf; I have acquir'd a right to ſpeak what I think. Your play, Sir, is a wretched performance; and in this opinion all mankind are united.

Sir Tho. May be not.

Bev. If your piece had been greatly receiv'd, I would have declar'd Sir Thomas Lofty the author; if coldly, I would have own'd it myſelf; but ſuch diſgraceful, ſuch contemptible treatment!—I own the burden is too heavy for me; ſo, Sir, you muſt bear it yourſelf.

Sir Tho. Me, dear Dick! what, to become ridiculous

lous in the decline of my life; to deſtroy, in one hour, the fame that forty years has been building! that was the prop, the ſupport of my age! Can you be cruel enough to deſire it?

Bev. Zounds! Sir, and why muſt I be your crutch? Would you have me become a voluntary victim. No, Sir, this cauſe does not merit a martyrdom.

Sir Tho. I own myſelf greatly oblig'd; but perſevere, dear Dick, perſevere; you have time to recover your fame; I beg it with tears in my eyes. Another play will—

Bev. No, Sir Thomas; I have done with the ſtage; the muſes and I meet no more.

Sir Tho. Nay, there are various roads open in life.

Bev. Not one where your piece won't purſue me: If I go to the bar, the ghoſt of this curſt comedy will follow, and hunt me in Weſtminſter-hall. Nay, when I die, it will ſtick to my memory, and I ſhall be handed down to poſterity with the author of *Love in a Hollow Tree.*

Sir Tho. Then marry: You are a pretty ſmart figure: and your poetical talents—

Bev. And what fair would admit of my ſuit, or family wiſh to receive me? Make the caſe your own, Sir Thomas; would you?

Sir Tho. With infinite pleaſure.

Bev. Then give me your niece; her hands ſhall ſeal up my lips.

Sir Tho. What, Juliet? Willingly. But are you ſerious? Do you really admire the girl?

Bev. Beyond what words can expreſs. It was by her advice I conſented to father your play.

Sir Tho. What, is Juliet appriz'd? Here Robin, John, run and call my niece hither this moment. That giddy baggage will blab all in an inſtant.

Bev. You are miſtaken; ſhe is wiſer than you are aware of.

Enter Juliet.

Sir Tho. Oh, Juliet! you know what has happen'd?

Jul. I do, Sir.

Sir Tho. Have you reveal'd this unfortunate ſecret?

Jul. To no mortal, Sir Thomas. *Sir*

Sir Tho. Come, give me your hand. Mr Bever, child, for my ſake, has renounced the ſtage, and the whole republic of letters; in return, I owe him your hand.

Jul. My hand! what, to a poet hooted, hiſſed, and exploded! You muſt pardon me, Sir.

Sir Tho. Juliet, a trifle! The moſt they can ſay of him is, that he is a little wanting in wit; and he has ſo many brother-writers to keep him in countenance, that now-a-days that is no reflection at all.

Jul. Then, Sir, your engagement to Mr Ruſt.

Sir Tho. I have found out the raſcal: he has been more impertinently ſevere on my play than all the reſt put together; ſo that I am determined he ſhall be none of the man.

Enter Ruſt.

Ruſt. Are you ſo, Sir? what, then, I am to be ſacrific'd, in order to preſerve the ſecret that you are a blockhead: but you are out in your politics; before night it ſhall be known in all the coffee-houſes in town.

Sir Tho. For heaven's ſake, Mr Ruſt!

Ruſt. And to-morrow I will paragraph you in every newſpaper; you ſhall no longer impoſe on the world; I will unmaſk you; the lion's ſkin ſhall hide you no longer.

Sir Tho. Juliet! Mr Bever! what can I do?

Bev. Sir Thomas, let me manage this matter. Harkee, old gentleman, a word in your ear? you remember what you have in your pocket?

Ruſt. Hey! how! what!

Bev. The curioſity that has coſt you ſo much pains.

Ruſt. What, my Æneas! my precious relict of Troy!

Bev. You muſt give up that or the lady.

Jul. How, Mr Bever?

Bev. Never fear; I am ſure of my man.

Ruſt. Let me conſider. As to the girl, girls are plenty enough; I can marry whenever I will: But my paper, my phœnix, that ſprings freſh from the flames, that can never be match'd.—Take her.

Bev. And as you love your own ſecret, be careful of ours.

Ruſt. I am dumb.

Sir Tho. Now, Juliet.

Jul.

Jul. You join me, Sir, to an unfortunate bard; but, to procure your peace—

Sir Tho. You oblige me for ever. Now the ſecret dies with us four. My fault. I owe him much.

Be it your care to ſhew it;
And bleſs the man tho' I have damn'd the poet.

BUCKS, HAVE AT YE ALL:

OR,

THE PICTURE OF A PLAY-HOUSE.

By DAVID GARRICK, Eſq.

Spoken by Mr WARD,

At the THEATRE-ROYAL, EDINBURGH, 1783.

YE ſocial friends of claret and of wit,
Where'er diſpers'd in merry groups ye ſit;
Whether below ye glide the glittering ſcene,
Or in the upper regions oft have been;
Ye bucks aſſembled at your Ranger's call,
Damme, I know ye—and have at ye all!
The motive here that ſets our bucks on fire,
The generous wiſh, the firſt and laſt deſire;
If you will plaud its echo to renown,
Or urg'd with fury tear the benches down;
'Tis ſtill the fame—to one bright goal we haſte,
To ſhow your judgment and approve your taſte.
'Tis not in nature for ye to be quiet:
No, demme, bucks exiſt but in a riot.

For

For inſtance now—to pleaſe the ear and charm th' ad
miring crowd,
Your bucks o' the boxes ſneer and talk aloud:
To the green box next with joyous ſpeed you run,
Hilly-ho! ho! my bucks! well, damn it, what's the fun
Tho' Shakeſpeare ſpeaks——regardleſs of the play,
Ye laugh and loll the ſprightly hours away:
For to ſeem ſenſible of real merit,
O damme, 'tis low, 'tis vulgar—beneath us lads of ſpirit
Your bucks o' the pit are miracles of learning,
Who point out faults to ſhow their own diſcerning;
And critic-like beſtriding martyr'd ſenſe,
Proclaim their genius and vaſt conſequence.
The ſidelong row, whoſe keener views of bliſs
Are chiefly center'd in a favourite miſs;
A ſet of jovial bucks who here reſort,
Fluſh'd from the tavern, reeling, ripe for ſport,
Wak'd from their dream oft join the general roar,
With bravo, bravo—braviſſimo, eh damme, encore!
Or, ſkipping that, behold another row,
Supply'd by citizens, or ſmiling beau;
Addreſſing Miſs, whoſe cardinal protection
Keeps her quite ſafe from rancorous detraction;
Whoſe lively eyes beneath a down-drawn hat,
Gives hint ſhe loves a little——you know what.
Ye bucks above, who range like gods at large—
Nay, pray, don't grin, but liſten to your charge—
You who deſign to change this ſcene of raillery,
And out-talk players in the upper-gallery;
Oh there's a youth, and one o' the ſprightly ſort—
I don't mean you——damme, you've no features for't—
Who ſlily ſkulks to hidden ſtation
(While players follow their vocation).
Whiſtle off off off! Noſee roaſt-beef—there's education.
Now I've explor'd this mimic world quite through,
And ſet each country's little faults to view:
In the right ſenſe receive the well-meant jeſt,
And keep the moral ſtill within your breaſt;
Convinc'd I'd not in heart or tongue offend,
Your hands acquit me, and I've gain'd my end.

END OF VOLUME FOURTH.

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Supplement to Bell's
British theatre

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